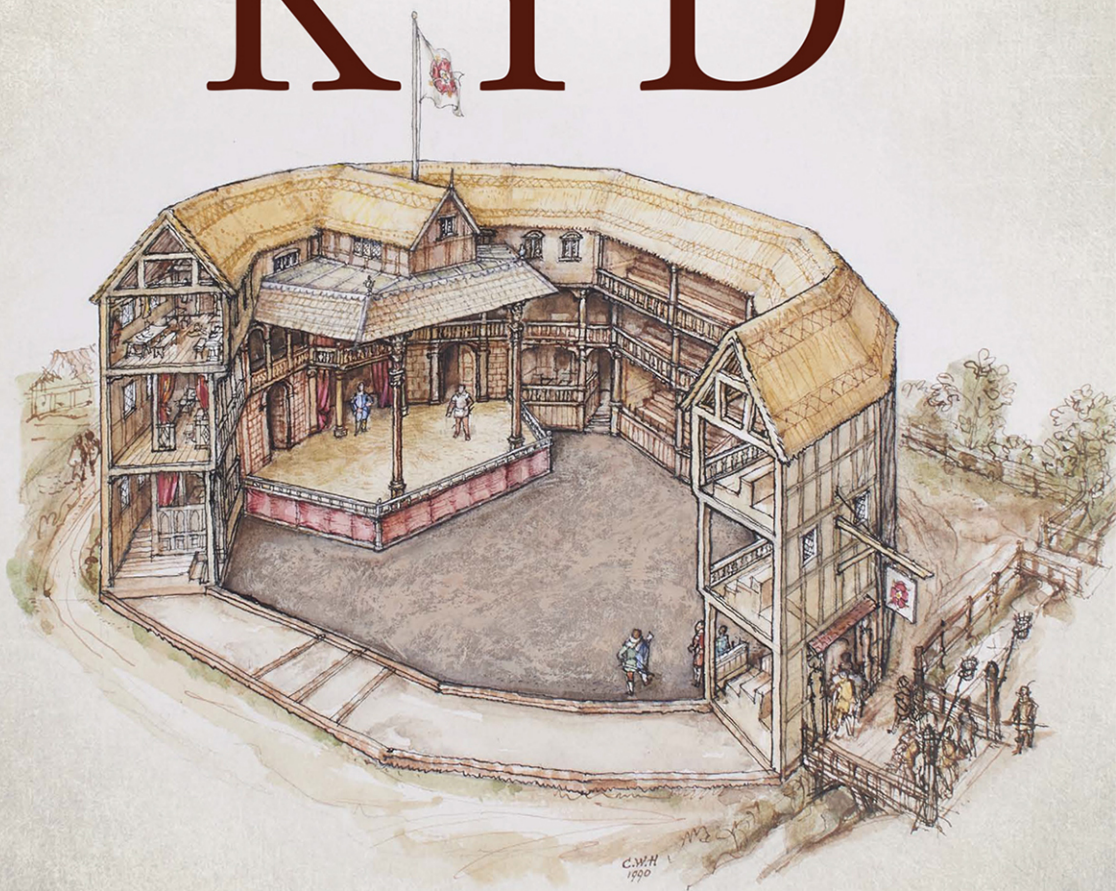


The Collected Works of
**THOMAS
KYD**



VOLUME ONE

GENERAL EDITOR

SIR BRIAN VICKERS

ASSOCIATE EDITOR DARREN FREEBURY-JONES

Studies in Renaissance Literature

Volume 44

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF THOMAS KYD

The Spanish Tragedie: OR, Hieronimo is mad againe.

Containing the lamentable end of *Don Horatio*, and
Belimperia; with the pittifull death of *Hieronimo*.

Newly corrected, amended, and enlarged with new
Additions of the *Painters* part, and others, as
it hath of late been diuers times acted.



LONDON,
Printed by W. White, for I. White and T. Langley,
and are to be sold at their Shop ouer against the
Sarazens head without New-gate. 1615.

The Murder of Horatio, from the frontispiece of *The Spanish Tragedie: Or Heironimo is mad againe*, Thomas Kyd (1615), British Library C.117.b.36.
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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF THOMAS KYD

Volume One

General Editor: Sir Brian Vickers

Associate Editor: Darren Freebury-Jones

D. S. BREWER

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Eugene Giddens, Domenico Lovascio, Daniel Starza Smith 2024

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Dedicated to the memory of David Bevington (1931–2019)
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1. Photo of the excavation of Rose Playhouse by the Museum of London Archaeology Unit, 1989. 30
2. Sketch of the ground plan of the Rose theatre, 1587 and 1592, by Walter Hodges, based on the 1989 excavations. Reproduced by permission of the Estate of C. W. Hodges. 31

PREFACE

The only previous attempt to collect Kyd's writings was made by Frederick S. Boas, a well-known historian of early modern drama.¹ Boas included three authentic works: *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Cornelia*, and *The Householder's Philosophy*. Boas rightly included *Soliman and Perseda*, urging its acceptance as genuine (pp. liv–lxi); this was just before Charles Crawford published his definitive attribution (1903). Boas was less judicious when he included the undistinguished prose pamphlet, *The Murder of John Brewen* (1592), which has no resemblance to Kyd. Boas accepted J. P. Collier's attribution on the basis of a signature, 'Tho. Kydd', in one copy: it has since been shown that this was another Collier forgery.² Boas forcefully rejected *The First Part of Ieronimo* as spurious (pp. xxix–xliv), but then printed it not as an appendix but in the text (pp. 295–337). Boas had followed up Sidney Lee's discovery of Kyd's first Letter to Puckering, and included a facsimile and a transcript. In an appendix, he included Kyd's *Verses of Praise and Joy* (pp. 339–42), but unkindly dismissed them as 'a specimen of Kyd's non-dramatic hack work' (p. xxv). Boas briefly discussed *Arden of Faversham*, finding it

as a whole, too nakedly realistic, too free, as the Epilogue claims, from 'filed points' to be in his distinctive vein. Yet, in the cadence and diction of many passages, and in the combination of lyrically elaborate verse-structure with colloquial directness of speech, [it] recalls the manner of Kyd far more nearly than that of Shakespeare, to whom it has been often groundlessly attributed.

(lxxxix–xc)

¹ F. S. Boas (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Kyd* (Oxford, 1901). When Oxford University reprinted it unchanged in 1955, Boas added a perfunctory list of 'Corrections and Additions 1902–54' (pp. xxvii–cxxvi).

² See R. M. Gorrell, 'John Payne Collier and "The Murder of John Brewen"', *MLN* 57 (1942), 441–4.

There are sensitive and perceptive comments in Boas's introduction, but the main weakness of his edition is its careless treatment of Kyd's text. The long critical review by W. W. Greg exposed an embarrassing number of errors.³

Kyd has been much more fortunate in editions of single works, such as the 'Revels Plays' editions of *The Spanish Tragedy* by Philip Edwards (1957) and of *Arden of Faversham* by M. L. Wine (1973), and the comparable edition of *The Spanish Tragedy* by Clara Calvo and Jesús Tronch (2013) for 'Arden Early Modern Drama'. While we acknowledge what we have learned from those editions, our aims are different. The priorities of this *Collected Works* are to provide textually accurate modern spelling versions, freshly derived from the original quarto editions, with full commentaries. We do not attempt the complete bibliographical collation that a single-text edition can offer, nor do we provide historical documentation of textual variants and stage directions. Our collations are limited to recording every substantive difference from the original editions, that is, changes in the meaning of the text. Since a main feature of this edition is its inclusion of newly attributed plays, for each of these an Authorship Commentary will be provided. These will document a selection of the most significant verbal matches between the new attributions and Kyd's accepted canon.

It only remains for me to thank all the people who have collaborated on this edition, starting with Boydell and Brewer. I was originally attracted to them partly because of their successful expansion to cover most of the humanities disciplines, partly because of their co-founder, my friend Derek Brewer. We both taught in the Cambridge English Faculty (in my case between 1964 and 1972), and were neighbours on Chesterton Road. Derek was the more senior but welcomed and encouraged his younger colleagues. He and his wife Elizabeth, a fellow medievalist, were a kind and generous couple and it gives me great pleasure to be associated with their memory in a new enterprise. I'm glad to know that Caroline Palmer, the current editorial director, worked very happily with Derek in her earlier career and regards him as her mentor. It has been a pleasure to work with her and Elizabeth McDonald, now the excellent commissioning editor for Studies in Renaissance Literature, who have the welcome but not universal characteristic attitude among publishers of being in a hurry to get a book published. I thank Nick Bingham, deputy head of production, for his efficiency, resourcefulness, and patience.

³ See *Modern Language Quarterly* 4 (1901), 186–90. Greg cited instances of 'a carelessness, not to say an utter indifference to accuracy, which it is impossible to pass over in silence' (187). See also J. Le Gay Brereton, 'Notes on the Text of Kydd', *Englische Studien* 37 (1907), 88–99.

Preface

I am extremely grateful to our team of editors, starting with the late David Bevington, an outstanding scholar and uncommonly generous colleague. David told me that he was happy to take on *1 Henry VI*, since it was the first Shakespeare play he edited, for Alfred Harbage's 'Pelican Shakespeare' in 1968. He was equally happy to add *Edward III*, a play he had never edited, showing his constant readiness to face new challenges. He completed this, his last assignment, just before his death and we dedicate the edition to his memory.

In Volume 1, I thank Daniel Starza Smith for editing Kyd's first publication, the *Verses of Praise and Joy* (1586), containing poems in both English and neo-Latin. Kyd demonstrated his linguistic skills again in his translation from Tasso, *The Householder's Philosophy* (1588), here edited by Domenico Lovascio. Matthew Dimmock has edited *Soliman and Perseda* (1588), and Eugene Giddens has been responsible for *King Leir* (1589). For the Authorship Commentary added to this, as to the other newly attributed plays, I have introduced a new method of documenting the phrasal matches with Kyd's accepted canon. When these are presented in a list printed after the play, I have noticed that few readers properly digest them. Here they will be shown as footnotes to the text as they occur, which will make them easier to take in and harder to ignore. Darren Freebury-Jones has kindly provided them for *King Leir*, as for *Arden of Faversham* and *Fair Em*. I owe Darren a special debt of gratitude: not only has he compiled these Authorship Commentaries, he has also edited *Arden of Faversham* and worked as my indefatigable Associate Editor. In this capacity he generously checked all of my contributions and has done the same for other editors. Each of us, however, is responsible for the texts published under our names.

Brian Vickers
11 April 2023

ABBREVIATIONS

AF	<i>Arden of Faversham</i>
ANQ	<i>American Notes and Queries</i>
BEPD	<i>A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration</i>
CELM	<i>The Catalogue of English Literary Manuscripts 1450–1700</i>
Corn.	<i>Cornelia</i>
E3	<i>Edward III</i>
EEBO	<i>Early English Books Online</i>
EMLS	<i>Early Modern Literary Studies</i>
EPT	<i>English Professional Theatre</i>
ES	<i>The Elizabethan Stage</i>
ESTC	<i>English Short Title Catalogue</i>
FE	<i>Fair Em</i>
1H6	<i>Henry VI Part One</i>
HD	<i>Henslowe's Diary</i>
HP	<i>The Householder's Philosophy</i>
KL	<i>King Leir</i>
LPD	<i>Lost Plays Database</i>
MLN	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
MSR	<i>Malone Society Reprints</i>
N&Q	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
RD	<i>Renaissance Drama</i>
SP	<i>Soliman and Perseda</i>
Sp. T.	<i>The Spanish Tragedy</i>

Abbreviations

SS	<i>Shakespeare Studies</i>
STC	<i>Short Title Catalogue</i>
TLS	<i>Times Literary Supplement</i>
VPJ	<i>Verses of Praise and Joy</i>

KYD AND THE LONDON THEATRE

Brian Vickers

As with many other Elizabethan writers, we know little about Thomas Kyd's life. On 6 November 1558, the parish register of St Mary Woolnoth recorded the baptism of 'Thomas, son of Francis Kidd, Citizen and Writer of the Courte Letter of London'. Kyd's father, Francis, rose to be Warden of the Company of Scriveners in 1580, the official body supervising 'a profitable and ancient trade'. Scriveners, officially known as 'Writers of the Court Letter', enjoyed 'a monopoly on engrossing charters, contracts, testaments, and official documents', functioning 'not only as notaries and copyists, but also as money lenders'.¹ The need for verbal accuracy in their profession made them insist that a scrivener's apprentice acquire a perfect knowledge of Latin grammar and be 'erudite in the books of genders, declensions, preterites and supines'. Francis Kyd had evidently had a grammar school education and ensured that his son had the same good start in life. Thomas must have received his first education at home, for when he entered the nearby Merchant Taylors' School on 26 October 1565, just before his seventh birthday, he was expected 'to know "the catechysm in English or Latyn" and be able to "read perfectly and write competently"'.

The curriculum of Merchant Taylors' envisaged six to eight years' intensive study of Latin grammar, as codified in the official 'King's grammar' of John Lily, reading a graded sequence of Latin authors (Cato, Terence, Virgil, Cicero's Letters, Sallust, Caesar, Horace's *Epistles*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*), and regularly composing Latin prose and verse, incorporating the figures of rhetoric. Although limited to Latin, the drilling in grammar, rhetoric, and classical prosody was so intense that it could hardly be matched in any modern university. Kyd published his Latin verse in his earliest work, *Verses of Prayse and Joye* (1586), celebrating Queen Elizabeth's escape from the Babington plot. *The Spanish Tragedy* includes several passages of Latin verse that Kyd wrote and also adapted to frame his quotations from classical Roman poets.

¹ See Arthur Freeman, *Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems* (Oxford, 1967).

In addition to a thorough acquisition of Latin, Kyd may have owed to Merchant Taylors' School his first exposure to drama. The headmaster Richard Mulcaster had been educated at Eton under Nicholas Udall, who had combined two Latin comedies (Plautus's *Miles Gloriosus* and Terence's *Eunuchus*) for his *Ralph Roister Doister*, the first English classical comedy (1567). Mulcaster emulated Udall by encouraging drama at Merchant Taylors', alongside music and games. The benefits of acting in Latin drama had been celebrated by humanist pedagogues throughout sixteenth-century Europe, but few schools can have brought their performances to such a high level as to be invited to act at court, which Mulcaster's boys did eight times between 1572 and 1583. His company also performed in the school hall in 1572–3 with an admission charge of one penny, 'the earliest record of a boy company playing before paying spectators.'²

There are no records of Kyd having been to either Oxford or Cambridge. After leaving school in about 1573 he may have worked for a while in his father's scriptorium, for the surviving examples of his handwriting show professional characteristics. One printed source (see below) associated Kyd with the Queen's Men in about 1585. Kyd may have written plays for that company, but none can be identified. In about 1588 Kyd was engaged by Lord Strange as a secretary, whose duties would include preparing legal documents and carrying out correspondence in English and Latin. He had a room in Strange's house and was able to continue writing plays.

The next stage in Kyd's life for which we have datable evidence is the period February to June 1592, when three of his plays were performed at the Rose theatre by Lord Strange's Men, a very successful season for Kyd (see below). His success was short-lived, however, for in April–May 1593 an outbreak of xenophobia in London resulted in a verse ultimatum calling for the murder of Protestant European refugees being posted on the walls of the Dutch church, signed 'Tamburlaine'. The authorities understood it as a declaration of authorship and ordered the arrest of Marlowe, at that time also in the employ of Lord Strange and sharing a room with Kyd. Unable to find Marlowe, the authorities arrested Kyd and seized his papers, which included 'vile hereticall Conceiptes denying the deity of Jhesus Criste our Saviour', which Kyd claimed belonged to Marlowe. To obtain more information they tortured Kyd, who wrote two letters to Sir John Puckering, Lord Keeper, protesting his innocence and describing Marlowe's well-documented atheism.³

² Michael Shapiro, *Children of the Revels: The Boy Companies of Shakespeare's Time and their Plays* (New York, 1977), p. 14.

³ Freeman, *Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems*, pp. 26–32.

Dismissed by Lord Strange, Kyd had to return to his parents' house, his professional and personal life ruined, and doubtless injured by torture. In the time remaining he was able to complete his translation of Garnier's *Cornélie*, which he dedicated to the Countess of Sussex in January 1594, probably in the hope of finding a future employer. He promised to send her his translation of Garnier's *Porcie*, but the parish register of St Mary Colchurch soon carried the entry: 'Thomas Kydd the sonne of ffrauncis Kydd was buryed the 15 day of August 1594.'

Kyd worked for London theatre companies from about 1585, as far as we can tell, to 1594, a period of great activity, if patchily documented. But enough evidence has survived for us to reconstruct several probable, and some possible, connections between his work and the theatrical context. These matters have been intensively studied by theatre historians for over a century, and much could be said about them. My aim here is to provide enough detail for us to appreciate the choices available to a dramatist in this period in terms of the acting companies, the theatres, and the preservation of his labours as either a manuscript or printed text. To set the scene I shall sketch in some relevant aspects of Elizabethan theatrical history, drawing on the classic synthesis by E. K. Chambers, but also on newer theatrical history, notably Glynne Wickham, Herbert Berry and William Ingram's volume in the series 'Theatre in Europe: a documentary history', dealing with the professional theatres in England between the Reformation and the Restoration.⁴

THE COMPANIES

Much of the surviving records from the administrative bodies during Elizabeth's reign – her government, the Lord Mayor, the Court of Aldermen, town and city councils across the land – concern attempts to control the public performance of plays, particularly during outbreaks of plague and at times of religious observance on Sundays, in Lent, and on other occasions (*EPT*, pp. 50–60, 77–89, 111–19). These attempted deterrents testify to the public demand for theatrical performances, to which the government responded in 1581 with the appointment of Edmund Tilney as Master of the Revels (*EPT*, pp. 69–73), giving him the power to license all plays, players, and playing places. One governmental regulation which had unlooked-for

⁴ *English Professional Theatre, 1530–1660* (Cambridge, 2000). The three editors are each responsible for the following topics: 'Part one: documents of control, 1530–1660' (pp. 17–149) is by Glynne Wickham; 'Part two: players and playing' (pp. 151–284) is by William Ingram; 'Part three: playhouses, 1560–1660' (pp. 285–674) is by Herbert Berry. All the documents it contains are given in modern spelling. (Hereafter referred to as '*EPT*').

positive effects was the Act of 29 June 1572 for the Punishment of Vagabonds, which ruled that ‘all Fencers, Bearwards, Common Playes in Enterludes & Minstrels, not belonging to any Baron of this Realm or towards any other honourable Personage of greater Degree,’ who ‘wander abroad, and have not licence of two Justices of the Peace ... shall be taken, adjudged and deemed Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars’ (p. 62). The consequence of this Act may not have been anticipated by the authorities, for within the sixteenth century alone, as William Ingram estimates, ‘the number of identifiable persons of rank or standing who were patrons of playing companies ... approached 100; most prominent among them were the various members of the royal family’ (p. 204). To have your own troupe of players was evidently a matter of considerable prestige, and in about 1572 a group of six actors already working for the Earl of Leicester petitioned him to be retained as ‘your humble servants and daily orators your players,’ requesting ‘your honour’s licence to certify that we are your household servants when we shall have occasion to travel amongst our friends as we do usually once a year, and as other noblemen’s players do and have done in times past ...’ (p. 205). In 1574 a royal patent was duly issued to those six actors, allowing them ‘to use, exercise, and occupy the art and faculty of playing comedies, tragedies, interludes, stage plays, and such other like as they have already used and studied, or hereafter shall use and study ...’ (p. 206).

Forming a company was one thing; maintaining it was another. Many of these acting troupes enjoyed a brief period of success, performing regularly for a while before dissolving or moving on to create other formations. In his classic account of *The Elizabethan Stage*, E. K. Chambers listed eleven boy companies and twenty-four adult companies which plied their trade at some point during any year between 1558 and 1616.⁵ As he recorded, ‘It is improbable that there was any continuity as regards membership between the bodies of actors successively appearing, often after long intervals, under the names of Sussex or Hunsdon or Derby’ (*ES*, 2:3). Some did manage to maintain a group, such as the company led by Lawrence and John Dutton, which served four masters between 1571 and 1583: first, Sir Robert Lane, then in turn, the Earls of Lincoln, Warwick, and Oxford (2:96–101). After the building of the first permanent theatres in 1576 there was a rapid growth in the number of adult companies maintained by the leading officers of state, such as that of the third Earl of Sussex, who became Lord Chamberlain in 1572 (2:92–6). A mark of a company’s eminence was the invitation to perform at one of the two main court drama seasons, at Christmas and Shrovetide. A Privy Council order of 1578 limited the right

⁵ See *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923), 2:1–260 (hereafter referred to as ‘*ES*’).

to perform in the Christmas festivities to six companies, namely Leicester's men, Warwick's, Sussex's, Essex's, and the two boys' companies, the Children of the Chapel and St Paul's (2:4; 4:278). The Queen may have felt that members of her nobility were seizing the limelight, for on 10 March 1583 Edmund Tilney was ordered 'To choose out a companie of players for her majestie' from the leading groups, 'out of which companies there were twelve of the best chosen, who 'were sworn the queens servants and were allowed wages and liveries as grooms of the chamber' (2:104). The troupe, which included 'the famous clown Richard Tarlton and the tragedian John Bentley', in the words of one theatre historian, 'set new standards in performance' while enhancing 'royal status through association with a genuinely popular entertainment'.⁶

Some companies did not survive the death of their patron, as happened to Sussex's Men in 1583 (2:94), Leicester's in 1588 (2:91), Strange's in 1594 (2:126), and Essex's in 1601 (2:103). Others went into at least a temporary decline following the loss of a leading actor, as happened to the Queen's Men with the death of Tarlton in December 1588 (2:109). But their failure made room for other companies. Lord Howard, who had been deputy Lord Chamberlain in 1574–5 under the Earl of Sussex, succeeded to that post in December 1583, but soon achieved a greater honour, being appointed Lord High Admiral in July 1585, and serving in that office until 1619. The Admiral's Men, led by Edward Alleyn, were to become one of the leading theatre companies after the conclusion of the long plague in 1594, but in the fluid years of the late 1580s and early 1590s they had a loose association with Lord Strange's Men, patronised by the Earls of Derby. This family had maintained a troupe of players from the 1530s to the 1570s, reaching some eminence in the early 1580s, with invitations to perform at court on several occasions. They vanished from the records in 1583, however, perhaps due to their leading actors having been poached for the Queen's Men.⁷ They were revived by Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, forming themselves out of Leicester's Men, and performing at the Cross Keys Inn in Gracechurch Street in November 1589, a venue that became their winter quarters. They soon reached a degree of eminence, being invited to act at court in

⁶ John H. Astington, *English Court Theatre 1558–1642* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 23, 109. For their dominance of court performances, see Astington's appendix listing all court performances, especially the period 1583–94 (pp. 231–4), where they appeared on 27 occasions.

⁷ Sally-Beth MacLean gives a scrupulously documented account of the family players' traditions in Lawrence Manley and Sally-Beth MacLean, *Lord Strange's Men and Their Plays* (New Haven, 2014), pp. 12–36, while Lawrence Manley continues the narrative in 'Lord Strange's Men in London, 1589–1593' (pp. 37–63). MacLean adds a detailed survey of 'Travels and Performance Venues' (pp. 247–79).

December 1590 and February 1591, being joined by Edward Alleyn of the Lord Admiral's Men, with three further court performances in 1592–3. Recently discovered documents show them performing at Henslowe's Rose theatre in the summer of 1590, where they later enjoyed two extended residences, from 19 February to 22 June 1592, and from 29 December 1592 to 1 February 1593. 'Involving an initial series of 105 consecutive performances of twenty-four different plays, old and new, and then a shorter series of twenty-nine performances, including three more new plays, for a total of twenty-seven plays in all, this was probably the longest tenure of one company of one playhouse, a rare period of stability in the fluid world of Elizabethan theatre.'⁸ Their takings varied between the packed house that attended '*harey the vj*' on 3 March to the low turn-out for *A Looking-Glass for London* on 7 March, which saw, respectively, 1,820 and 168 spectators in the galleries, but they were amongst the most profitable of the periods of playing recorded by Henslowe.⁹ During these years Alleyn led Strange's Men while retaining his status as the Lord Admiral's servant, coming into his own once the latter company re-established itself in 1594, the year of Kyd's death.

Two other companies performed in London in the 1590s. The Earl of Pembroke's Men were not mentioned before 26 December 1592 and experienced difficulties in the summer of 1593, when they gave the first of two performances at court, but they must have been in existence for some time in order to achieve that eminence, performing alongside Lord Strange's Men.¹⁰ In a much-quoted letter to his son-in-law Edward Alleyn, written on 28 September, Henslowe reported 'and as for my Lord of Pembroke's men which you desire to know where they be, they are all at home and have been this five or six weeks, for they cannot save their charges with travel, as I hear, and were fain to pawn their apparel for their charge.'¹¹ First, the troupe appeared on provincial tours eighteen times, sixteen of them '*after June–July 1593, when they were supposedly forced to disband*' (they evidently reclaimed their costumes from pawn). Secondly, analysis of their payments shows that 'Pembroke's Men enjoyed the second-highest average reward per visit, second only to the Queen's Men, before they disbanded upon the Earl's death in 1601.'¹² Indeed, all the evidence 'suggests that Pembroke's

⁸ Manley, *ibid.*, p. 59.

⁹ Astington, *op. cit.*, pp. 233–4.

¹⁰ See Manley and MacLean, *Lord Strange's Men*, p. 310.

¹¹ R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert (eds), *Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge, 1961), p. 280: I have expanded manuscript contractions.

¹² Alan Somerset, 'Not Just Sir Oliver Owlet: From Patrons to Patronage of Early Modern Theatre', in Richard Dutton (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 343–61 (345). Note, however, that for 'have been' or

was a remarkably successful and active company' (p. 347). One less resilient group was the company of Lord Hunsdon, Lord Chamberlain from 1585 to 1596, which gave a court performance on 6 January 1586, together with the Admiral's Men, but soon faded from record. A completely new Chamberlain's Men was formed in June 1594, when they shared a season for Henslowe with the new Admiral's company at Newington Butts before setting up on their own. These two companies dominated the London theatre scene for many years in that period of stability and success that Kyd did not live to see. In his brief career as a dramatist, five companies could have performed his plays, those patronized by the Earl of Leicester, the Queen, Lord Strange, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Lord High Admiral.

THE THEATRES

The range of theatre companies, bewildering in its diversity and fragility, is matched in more permanent form by the range of available performance spaces in London, further testimony to the remarkable appetite for the theatre in this period.¹³ The first structure built as a regular professional theatre was the Red Lion in Whitechapel, scheduled for opening in July 1567 to perform a play called *The Story of Samson* (*EPT*, pp. 290–1). As Herbert Berry observes, 'within twenty years, professional actors were regularly at work in no fewer than ten other structures there', three of which involved large capital investment (p. 287). In all, 'twenty-three professional theatres ... were built in and around London during the seventy-five years from 1567 to 1642. Probably nothing of the kind had happened in any other city on earth' (p. 288). The growing desire to experience a flourishing secular theatre – the religious Guild plays were still being suppressed as late as 1576 (*EPT*, pp. 64–9) – led to four London inns doubling up as playhouses from about 1575 to 1596. These were the Bel Savage in Ludgate Hill, the Bull in Bishopsgate Street, the Cross Keys, and the Bull on the west side of Gracechurch Street, north of Lombard Street (where Kyd's family lived). In retrospect the inns may seem like interim solutions until the first purpose-built theatres were opened, but even after 1576 the major companies continued to use them. The Queen's Men acted at the Bull and the Bell during their first year, 1583; Lord Strange's Men performed at the Cross Keys in 1589,

'hauffe ben', in the transcription of R. A. Focker, Somerset reads 'hausse ben', reproducing the erroneous reading by E. K. Chambers in *ES*, 2:128.

¹³ See *ES*, 2:353–474. I take my documentation from Herbert Berry's wonderfully detailed survey in *EPT*, pp. 285–674.

defying the Lord Mayor's veto; and the Lord Chamberlain's wanted to act there in 1594 (pp. 295–305).¹⁴

The year 1576 is noted in theatrical history as that in which three new public playing spaces came into use. The least well documented is Newington Butts (*EPT*, pp. 320–9), probably because it was the least convenient, lying one mile south of the river, near the Elephant and Castle inn. The actor Jerome Savage (first recorded as performing at court in 1575 for the Earl of Warwick's new company) converted an existing building into a playhouse, and may have used it until 1580, when his company dissolved. Lord Strange's Men acted there in September 1593, after the Privy Council had closed the Rose theatre, and for the same reason Henslowe hired the playhouse in June 1594 for a short season in which the actors were 'the former Lord Strange's Men, who during the long closings from 22 June to 14 May 1594 had broken into two separate companies: the Lord Admiral's with Edward Alleyn and the Lord Chamberlain's with Richard Burbage. The two companies did not now reunite but took turns playing their own plays' (*EPT*, p. 328). They gave two performances of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, two of Peele and Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, and one of *Hamlet* (possibly by Kyd). This playing space closed later that year.

Much more is known about the Theatre, a name that, as George Puttenham reminded his readers, derived from the Greek *Théâtron*, 'as much as to say a beholding place'.¹⁵ This was a custom-built public playhouse in Shoreditch, situated a quarter of a mile outside the City boundary, largely due to a series of legal disputes between James Burbage ('a joiner turned actor') and his partners in the enterprise (*EPT*, pp. 330–87).¹⁶ After a long stalemate Burbage's son Cuthbert hired a carpenter to dismantle the building at the end of December 1598, using the timbers to build the Globe theatre on a site in Southwark. With its large yard, tiring-house, and galleries, the Theatre was 'probably the archetypal Shakespearean public playhouse', and was used by every successful company: Leicester's, Warwick's, Oxford's, the Queen's, the Lord Admiral's, Lord Strange's (later Derby's Men), and the Chamberlain's (p. 332). Contemporary preachers disapprovingly described it as 'sumptuous' (p. 337) and 'gorgeous' (p. 339), and its name survived in

¹⁴ See also David Kathman, 'Inn-Yard Playhouses', in Dutton (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, pp. 153–67; and Lawrence Manley, 'Why did London inns function as theatres?', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 71:1 (2008): 181–97.

¹⁵ Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie*, ed. Gladys Doidge Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge, 1936, 1970), p. 37.

¹⁶ See also C. W. Wallace, *The First London Theatre* (Lincoln, NE, 1913); Herbert Berry, *Shakespeare's Playhouses* (New York, 1987); and William Ingram, *The Business of Playing: The Beginnings of the Adult Professional Theater in Elizabethan London* (Ithaca and London, 1992), pp. 182–218.

Lodge's famous comparison, 'Pale as the vizard of the ghost which cried so miserably at the Theatre, like an Oyster wife, "Hamlet, revenge"' (p. 367) – presumably the same play performed at Newington Butts in 1594 (possibly by Kyd).

In 1577, shortly after the Theatre's opening, an unknown entrepreneur built another public playhouse in Shoreditch, some 200 yards south of the Theatre, called the Curtain, of which few documents survive (*EPT*, pp. 405–18). During the period that concerns us here, up to Kyd's death in August 1594, 'no company is definitely known to have played there ... though Lord Arundel's Men were probably there in 1584' (p. 406).

The last public playhouse built during Kyd's life was also the best documented, the first to be built on Bankside in Southwark, and Philip Henslowe's first theatre, the Rose (*EPT*, pp. 418–36). The playhouse opened in 1587, but no information survives about the companies that acted there. In early 1592 Henslowe enlarged the Rose so that it could hold more spectators, and at the same time he began keeping a record of the companies that acted there, listing his receipts from each performance. Starting on 19 February, with Lord Strange's Men, he noted the first takings: from *Friar Bacon* (by Greene), *Muly Molocco* (possibly Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar*), *Orlando Furioso* (Greene), *The Spanish Comedy Don Horatio* (Kyd?), *The Jew of Malta* (Marlowe), and so on. Kyd was still alive in the summer of 1594, when the Admiral's Men began their long and fruitful stay (until 1600). A further series of public theatres continued to be built in London, another ten between 1595 and 1623 (*EPT*, pp. 440–646), but Kyd did not live to see them.

The final element in this brief sketch of the London theatre world during Kyd's lifetime concerns the most ephemeral of all its artefacts, the scripts from which the actors performed. An unknown number of authors kept the theatre companies in business by writing plays for them, of which the vast majority have perished. William Ingram, following up a 1578 reference to there being "eighte ordinarie places" of playing in the City, has estimated that, if eight companies performed 'for only nine months in the year and only four days each week, then those eight companies alone would have provided over twelve hundred performances each year for London playgoers'.¹⁷ If we assume 'a dozen performances for each text', then 'the playing companies in these eight favored locations would have required a hundred or so different scripts each year'. Further, if we take into account 'the twenty-odd companies not playing in London' then 'something like two hundred plays a year' would have been needed (pp. 240–1). Companies must have regularly needed playwrights, but no documentation

¹⁷ Ingram, *The Business of Playing*, p. 240.

of the negotiating process survives – with one exception, published by Mark Benbow in 1981.¹⁸ In 1573 the brothers Lawrence and John Dutton, freemen of the Weavers' Company and stage players – who, as we have seen, successfully moved their acting company from patron to patron – sued one Rowland Broughton for breach of contract. The Duttons, together with Thomas Gough, a fellow actor (and barber-surgeon), had intended to set up a company of boy players, 'to play upon all Sundays and holidays in the year ... being not prohibited', and to perform 'some one history, comedy, or tragedy whatsoever of the only device and making of the said Rowland Broughton'. The contract stipulated that during a term of 'two years and a half' Broughton should deliver 'eighteen several [separate] plays of the only devise of the said Rowland Broughton and never before played'. The stipulation that these compositions should be 'of the only device and making of the same Rowland Broughton' is further evidence (should it be needed) that the author was fully recognized as such during the sixteenth century, as in the medieval period, and indeed all the way back to classical antiquity.¹⁹ It also shows the need, in this increasingly competitive world, for companies to obtain new playscripts, 'never before played'.

This single document apart, no evidence of the innumerable contracts between playwrights and theatre companies survives before December 1599, when Philip Henslowe began making records of the moneys he advanced to the Admiral's Men for the commission and supply of new plays.²⁰ Given that three new playing spaces were available in London after 1576, the demand for playbooks must have been greater; yet, as Ingram noted, 'for no single year in the ten years between 1576 and 1586 have more than five or six play texts survived, and the bulk of these are courtly or university plays' (p. 241). It is frustrating that fewer than a dozen plays from the public theatre survive from what must have been 'an astonishingly active period'. The situation changed with 'the sudden and gratifying appearance, in 1586 and 1587, of plays by the group collectively known as the University Wits', as Ingram put it, who seemed to realize for the first time 'the print worthiness of plays' (pp. 241–2). That is an account of a vital change in attitudes seen from the viewpoint of the professional theatre, and doubtless needs to be complemented by the simultaneous recognition by

¹⁸ See R. Mark Benbow, 'Dutton and Goffe versus Broughton: A Disputed Contract for Plays in the 1570s', *REED Newsletter* 2 (1981): 2, 3–9. My quotations come from the modernized text in *EPT*, pp. 234–5, expanding editorial supplements.

¹⁹ For a brief refutation of this modern misconception, see Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author* (Oxford, 2002), Appendix II: 'Abolishing the Author? Theory versus History', pp. 506–41.

²⁰ See Grace Ioppolo, *Dramatists and their Manuscripts in the Age of Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton and Heywood* (London, 2006).

the London stationers and printers that playbooks could constitute a small but commercially viable share of their output.²¹

So far, I have limited this sketch of the London theatre during Kyd's lifetime to the public playhouses, since there is no evidence that he ever worked for the boys' companies in the indoor theatres. But one other theatrical context needs to be considered. Despite Ingram's accolade, the 'University Wits' had been anticipated by members of 'the third university', as it was known, the Inns of Court, who managed to get their dramatic performances published in the 1560s. The great contribution of these university-educated authors was to introduce a new verse form into vernacular drama. As O. B. Hardison pointed out,

One of the more interesting facts about English blank verse is that it was invented. The evidence suggests it was the result of a self-conscious effort by Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, around 1540, to create a vernacular English form equivalent to the dactylic hexameter of classical epic. It is thus a contribution to the efforts of English esoteric humanism to reproduce in the vernacular the great genres and effects of ancient literature. Surrey clearly derived much inspiration from Vergil, but he was also influenced by what he learned from Italian literature.²²

Surrey's Italian models included poets who had published translations of the *Aeneid* into *versi sciolti*, unrhymed pentameters, especially Aristotle Zoppio's compilation of translations by various hands, of which 'Books 2 and 4 were published in 1539–40'.²³ Surrey translated Books 2 and 4 only, his version achieving wide circulation through Richard Tottel's *Songes and sonettes, written by Henry Haward late earle of Surrey and other* (1557; six editions by 1559, ten by 1584). Within a few years the Inns of Court dramatists adopted blank verse for their compositions. The 'gentlemen of the Inner Temple' acted a play called *Gorboduc* or *The Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex* at their Christmas revels in 1561–2, and were invited to perform it again before the Queen on 18 January 1562. When published in 1565, the title page described it as *The Tragedie of Gorboduc, Where of three Actes were wrytten by Thomas Norton, and the two laste by Thomas Sackvyle*. That novelty was soon followed by *Jocasta: A Tragedie written in Greeke by Euripides, translated and digested into Acte by George Gascoyne, and*

²¹ See the excellent survey by Peter Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', in J. D. Cox and D. S. Kastan (eds), *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York and London, 1997), pp. 383–422.

²² O. B. Hardison, Jr, *Prosody and Purpose in the English Renaissance* (Baltimore and London, 1989), p. 127.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 130. Other exponents of *versi sciolti* who influenced Surrey probably included Luigi Alamanni and Giangiorgio Trissino.

Francis Kinwelmerse of Grayes Inne, and there by them presented 1566, and first published in Gascoigne's *A Hundreth sundrie Flowres* (1573). After an interval of some years, 1587 saw the publication of *The misfortunes of Arthur (Uther Pendragons Sonne) reduced into Tragicall notes by Thomas Hughes one of the societie of Grayes-Inne*, published in *Certaine Devises and shewes presented to her Majestie by the Gentlemen of Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in Greenewich, the twenty-eighth day of Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her Majesties most happy Raigne*.²⁴ All three plays are in blank verse, although *Gorboduc* includes some rhyming couplets, which may be 'relics of the old habit of rhyming',²⁵ while both *Jocasta* and *The Misfortunes of Arthur* use rhyme for the choric odes. The modern reader, knowing how pliable it was to become, may find the iambic pentameter in these plays both irregular and monotonous, but the Inns of Court dramatists introduced a verse form which could range from the eloquently expressive to the conversational. As F. P. Wilson judged, 'nothing is more important in these years ... than the invention of blank verse and its transference to drama in *Gorboduc* and *Jocasta* ready for the hands of Kyd and Marlowe, an invention which was to rid the drama of the monstrous monotony of the fourteener'.²⁶

From the surviving evidence, Thomas Kyd entered the London theatre world between 1585 and 1587, as near as can be judged, with *The Spanish Tragedy*, a play which confidently uses all the stylistic media available to the Elizabethan dramatist – blank verse, rhyme and prose – and daringly exploits theatrical resources. Of its first performances, we know neither the company's identity nor the place where it was first performed. The role of Hieronimo demands an actor of stature and energy, while the large cast needs a fully equipped performance space. Leicester's Men were still active in 1587–8, although they had lost some of their best players to the Queen's Men. They are recorded performing in London on about 25 January 1587, and toured extensively until 4 September 1588, a few days before Leicester died. A more likely troupe to have performed *The Spanish Tragedy* are the Queen's Men, who, as we have seen, were founded in March 1583 by royal command. Edmund Tilney, Master of the Revels, having been instructed 'to choose out a companie of players for her majestie', formed an unusually large company 'of twelve men and an undefined number of boys', an

²⁴ All three Inns of Court plays are conveniently available in John W. Cunliffe (ed.), *Early English Classical Tragedies* (Oxford, 1912). Despite the title page's claim, *Jocasta* was based not on Euripides but on Lodovico Dolce's *Giocasta*, 'which in turn is an extensive adaptation of Euripides' *Phoenissae*': cf. G. W. Pigman III (ed.), *George Gascoigne: A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (Oxford, 2000), p. 508.

²⁵ Cunliffe, *Early English Classical Tragedies*, p. 299 note.

²⁶ F. P. Wilson, *The English Drama 1485–1585*, ed. G. K. Hunter (Oxford, 1969), pp. 142–3.

increase in scale which offered dramatists the chance to write “large” plays requiring casts of fifteen or more speaking parts, with smaller roles being doubled.²⁷ Tilney took ‘twelve of the best’ actors, an early witness recorded, from the extant adult companies belonging to the Earls of Leicester, Sussex, Derby and others, so creating the Queen’s Men,

the best acting company in England ... an instant all-star troupe, which would hold the advantage on the calendar of holiday performances at court, would claim royal privileges for securing playing places in the inn yards of London and in the new purpose-built playhouses outside the city walls, and would receive higher rewards than their competitors as they toured the countryside.²⁸

Our knowledge of Kyd’s possible connection with the Queen’s Men derives from Thomas Dekker’s pamphlet, *A Knight’s Conjuring* (1607). Dekker envisaged a scene in the Elysian fields, where a laurel grove shelters famous dead poets, one group including ‘old *Chaucer*, reverend for prioritie’, and ‘*Grave Spenser*’.

In another companie sat learned *Watson*, industrious *Kyd*, ingenious *Atchlow*, and (tho hee had bene a Player, molded out of their pennes) yet because he had bene their *Lover*, and a Register to the Muses, Inimitable *Bentley*: these were likewise carowsing to one another at the holy well, some of them singing Pæans to *Apollo*, som of them *Hymnes* to the rest of the Goddes ...²⁹

As T. W. Baldwin was the first to see, the implication of Dekker’s grouping ‘is that Kyd had written plays before 1585, probably for the Queen’s Men.’³⁰ John Bentley (1553–85) was a well-known actor, a member of the Queen’s Men from 1583–5, and friend of this trio of poets. The learned Thomas Watson (1557–92), equally fluent in Latin and English, translated Italian madrigals and wrote numerous sonnets. Kyd imitated one of them in *The Spanish Tragedy*.³¹ Arthur Freeman was able to throw some light on Thomas Atchelow, whose name is variously spelled, ‘Achellely’ being the most likely

²⁷ See *ES*, 2:104–15, and Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 55–60.

²⁸ Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, *The Queen’s Men and their Plays* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. xiii, 1–2.

²⁹ Dekker, *A Knight’s Conjuring Done in earnest: Discouered in Iest*. (London, 1607; STC 6508), sig. K8^v–L1^r. Cit. Freeman, *Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems*, p. 13.

³⁰ T. W. Baldwin, *On the Literary Genetics of Shakespeare’s Plays 1592–1594* (Urbana, IL, 1959) (op. cit., n. 46), p. 178. See also Lukas Erne, *Beyond The Spanish Tragedy: A Study of the Works of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester, 2001), pp. 1–2, 163.

³¹ At 2.1.3–6, Lorenzo quotes lines from Watson’s *Hekatompathia*, sonnet XLVII, to which Balthasar responds at ll. 9–10, quoting the two lines following. See Brian

version, and used in the *Short Title Catalogue* (STC). He published a diminutive prayer book, *The Key of Knowledge* (1571); a Hispanophobic narrative poem in ‘poulter-meter’ (1576); a prefatory poem in iambic pentameters to Thomas Watson’s *Hekatompathia* (1582); and some verse fragments surviving in Robert Allott’s anthology *England’s Parnassus* (1600), the year in which Achelley died. The three poets had been already mentioned in the opportunistic compilation by Francis Meres, *Palladis Tamia* (1598), which included a treatise on ‘Poetrie’. Meres twice referred to Kyd, first in a general list of notable English writers, where his name appears alongside Thomas Atchelowe, Thomas Watson, Robert Greene, and George Peele. Secondly, in a list of ‘our best [English poets] for Tragedie’, Kyd is ranked with Marlowe, Watson, Peele, Shakespeare, Chapman, Jonson, and others.³² As for John Bentley, he seems to have performed some works written by the others (‘moulded out of their pennes’), which are now lost. The epithet ‘industrious Kyd’, coming from Dekker, who was involved in the composition of over eighty plays,³³ suggests a copious and accomplished dramatist, who might have produced a larger oeuvre than has survived.³⁴ He had certainly aligned himself with a major company.

Kyd’s connection with this premier troupe indicates the high estimate that professional theatre men had formed of his abilities. Commenting on Dekker’s testimony that Kyd was one of three authors who had written roles for the company’s chief tragic actor, John Bentley, two historians of the company comment that

Only Kyd is known to have written for the common stage among this group, and he is not known to have written for the Queen’s Men. But ‘known’ is a rare quality when it comes to the authors of plays in the 1580s, even the titles of which have disappeared, with few exceptions. It is quite possible that the *Felix and Philomena* or the *Phillyda and Corin* (both now lost) which the Queen’s Men played at court in 1585 came

Vickers, ‘Thomas Watson, Thomas Kyd, and Embedded Poetry’, *Studies in Philology* 120:3 (2023): 557–601.

³² See Don Cameron Allen (ed.), *Francis Meres’s Treatise “Poetrie”* (Urbana, IL, 1933; *University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature*, vol. XVI), pp. 77, 78. Allen showed that Meres’s treatise was a perfunctory imitation of a section in the *Officina*, a popular compendium of universal knowledge compiled by the humanist J. Ravius Textor (1520; eight editions by 1595). Meres simply substituted English names for those of Greek, Latin, and neo-Latin authors.

³³ Martin Wiggins, personal communication, 13 August 2023; an excerpt from *British Drama*, vol. 11 (forthcoming). He added: ‘The only ones that look “bigger” at a glance on the page are Heywood and Jonson.’

³⁴ Lukas Erne, *Beyond The Spanish Tragedy*, notes that “‘industrious” also had the now obsolete meaning “showing intelligent or skilful work” (*OED*)’ (p. 11, n. 8).

from writers like Watson, Achlow, or Kyd, the three who are said to have moulded John Bentley with their pens.³⁵

The Queen's Men play that McMillin and MacLean treat as foundational in studying the company's repertoire is *The True Chronicle History of King Leir*,³⁶ one of several plays based on English history, which the Queen's Men 'were the first professional company to undertake extensively' (p. 33). In the previous century two scholars ascribed *King Leir* to Kyd, and I have recently provided substantial new evidence for his authorship of this 'most famous Chronicle historye',³⁷ which Eugene Giddens has freshly edited for this volume.

The Queen's Men enjoyed only a brief period of eminence. As already noted, the company had been weakened by the deaths of several actors, culminating in 1588 with that of their leading player, Richard Tarlton, and seems to have gone into decline. In about 1588–9 (calculating back from the 'vi yeares' service that he counted in 1593), Kyd began working as a secretary (responsible for Latin correspondence and the preparation of official documents) for Ferdinando, fifth Earl of Derby. This would have given him privileged access to transfer his allegiance to Lord Strange's Men, the company in the service of the Earl. The only play for which his connection was formally recognized was the undated quarto (c. 1593), *A Pleasant Comodie of Faire Em ... As it was sundrie times publiquely acted in the honourable citie of London, by the right honourable the Lord Strange his servants*,³⁸ but company connections were not universally recorded. Previous companies connected with the Derby family had been a mixture of actors and tumblers, but their Elizabethan formation was a formidable group of actors, many of whom were to have long and influential careers.³⁹ Their leading actor was Edward Alleyn, who retained his status as a member of the company patronized by Charles Howard, Lord Admiral, in a flexible amalgamation between the two companies which lasted from 1589–90 until 1594. In that year, a number of troupes collapsed during the plague

³⁵ McMillin and MacLean, *The Queen's Men*, p. 29.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 94, 100–1, 107–8, 133–4, 137, 146–7, 161–2.

³⁷ See Brian Vickers, 'Kyd's Authorship of *King Leir*', *Studies in Philology* 115 (2018): 433–71, and the Authorship Commentary supplied by Darren Freebury-Jones to Eugene Giddens's edition.

³⁸ W. W. Greg, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration* (henceforth *BEPD*), 4 vols (London, 1939; 1970) #113; 1:192–3.

³⁹ My account of Strange's Men is largely based on Chambers, *ES*, 2:118–27 and Gurr, 1996, pp. 259–77. See also Carol Chillington Rutter (ed.), *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, rev. edn (Manchester, 1999), a valuable chronological arrangement of documentary evidence from Henslowe and other sources; Peter Thomson, *Shakespeare's Professional Career* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 23–51.

that devastated London. The other members of Strange's Men mentioned in a Privy Council document of May 1593 included William Kemp, Thomas Pope, John Heminges, Augustine Phillipps, and George Brian. They enjoyed a 'remarkable success ... in the winter of 1591–2, during which they were called upon to give six performances at Court ... as against one each allotted to the Queen's, Sussex's, and Hertford's men'. On 19 February 1592 they acted for Philip Henslowe at the newly refurbished Rose theatre, where they 'played six days a week for a period of eighteen weeks, during which they only missed Good Friday and two other days', a total of 105 performances (*ES*, 2:121). Modern theatre historians agree about their eminence: one writes that the company reached 'the pinnacle of their national reputation in 1591–3' (Thomson, p. 41); another, that 'Lord Strange's Men had been formed and [were] working at a high level for several months before moving into the Rose', at which time 'they were London's most prestigious company' (Rutter, p. 50); a third, that by 1591 they 'had climbed to the peak of esteem' (Gurr, pp. 258–9). That Kyd should have worked in turn for the two leading London theatre companies shows the high standing he enjoyed among his peers.

THE LONDON THEATRE WORLD

Kyd's position as secretary to a noble lord placed him in an unusual position, having his plays performed in the public theatres but not as a colleague of the dramatists who earned their living there. As far as we know, Kyd had no university education, and it was his misfortune to fall foul of the two most vociferous of the 'University Wits', anxious to defend their status against interlopers, first Greene, then Nashe. Greene attacked *Fair Em* in an address 'to the Gentlemen Students of both Universities' prefixed to his moralizing fable, *Greenes farewell to Folly. Sent to Courtiers and Schollers as a president to warne them from the vaine delights that drawes youth on to repentance*. This pamphlet was entered in the Stationers' Register (S.R.) on 11 June 1587 to E. Aggas,⁴⁰ but the earliest known edition is the Quarto of 1592 (printed for T. Gubbin and N. Newton). Greg acutely observed that the term 'Martinize', which Greene uses in the dedication, dates the text to 1589 or later, since that was when the first Martin Marprelate tracts appeared; he concluded that *Fair Em* must have been staged between 1589 and 1591. Greene's diatribe against the play gains a new significance when we recognize that it was really directed against its author, Thomas Kyd.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Edward Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554–1640*, 5 vols (London, 1875–94), 2:219.

⁴¹ See the Introduction to my edition of *Fair Em* in Volume 2.

Having been mocked by Greene, Kyd received further attention that year from the copious and caustic pen of Thomas Nashe. We may take their joint displeasure as proving that Kyd had definitely made an impact in the London theatre. Greene criticized the author of *Fair Em* for two trivial solecisms, a common attitude among those dramatists who cherished a sense of scholarly superiority over their fellows.⁴² Nashe went further, producing a lengthy put-down in his preface to Greene's romance, *Menaphon. Camillas alarum to slumbering Euphues, in his melancholie Cell at Silexedra* (entered S.R. 23 August 1589).⁴³ Nashe made fun of Kyd's use of Seneca, his translations from Italian and French, a supposed error concerning the classical underworld, and for daring 'to bodge up a blanke verse with ifs and ands', as if Kyd used those words to pad out his barren invention. But Nashe took the quotation out of context (the perennial method of facile polemic). It comes from *The Spanish Tragedy* (2.1.76–7) where Lorenzo is pressurizing Pedringano to reveal the name of Bel-Imperia's lover. When her servant tries to evade answering – 'If Madam Bel-Imperia be in love' – Lorenzo interrupts – 'What, villain, *if's* and *an's*? – and threatens to kill him. Restoring the context destroys the witticism. Nashe described his outburst as having been written in a 'declamatorie vaine', suggesting that it was not to be taken entirely seriously, the *declamatio* being a rhetorical genre connected with mock praise and mock blame. Nashe's exuberant exercise in mockery at least establishes that *The Spanish Tragedy* was known in the London theatre long before Henslowe's first record of it being performed. Three years later Nashe collaborated with Kyd on the play that Henslowe called *harey the vi*, showing that he had been accepted as a professional dramatist.

Despite the mockery of Greene and Nashe, by 1592 Kyd's status in Lord Strange's company was assured, as can be seen if we return to Henslowe's records of their season in the spring and early summer of that year. Between 19 February and 23 June 1592, when an outbreak of plague closed the London theatres, they played six days a week for a period of eighteen weeks, apart from Good Friday and two other days, giving a total of 105 performances. When the theatres briefly reopened, from 29 December to the end of January 1593, Henslowe recorded a further twenty-nine performances.

⁴² Compare Jonson's disapproving comments on Shakespeare's errors: 'His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so too. Many times he fell into those things, could not escape laughter: as when he said in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him, "Caesar, thou dost me wrong"; he replied, "Caesar did never wrong, but with just cause"; and such like: which were ridiculous.' *Timber: or discoveries made upon men and matter*, in Brian Vickers (ed.), *English Renaissance Literary Criticism* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 561–2.

⁴³ For a discussion of Nashe's skirmishing see Brian Vickers, *Recovering Thomas Kyd: A Canon Restored* (Princeton, forthcoming).

During their first season at the Rose, Strange's Men performed twenty-three different plays, and added three more to their repertoire in the shorter second season. Inevitably, many of those have perished, including such evidently popular plays as *Sir John Mandeville* or *Henry of Cornwall*, which remained in their repertoire until the end. As we have seen, the plays of known authorship displayed the leading dramatists (Greene, Peele, Marlowe) appearing side by side. The co-authored play by Lodge and Greene, *A Looking Glass for London*, was performed four times, and a play of (as yet) unknown authorship, *A Knack to Know a Knave*, was played seven times.

Theatre historians document the activities of companies, their repertoires, and the venues at which they performed, but seldom consider the authors who provided the plays. An invisible demarcation line runs through contemporary scholarship, setting theatre historians on one side, literary historians on the other. Neither group has paid much attention to authorship attribution studies, an oversight which has perpetuated the occlusion of Thomas Kyd from the recognition he deserves as the leading playwright of Lord Strange's Men. Kyd's most famous play, 'Jeronymo', or *The Spanish Tragedy*, was given sixteen times in this season, and was often accompanied, either on the day preceding or following, by the piece that Henslowe variously named 'spanes comedye donne oracioe', 'the comodey of doneoracio', 'doneoracio', and 'the comodey of Jeronymo', given seven times. This play must have been by Kyd, it being inconceivable that any other dramatist would have been allowed to write a comedy for Strange's Men on (presumably) the pre-history of Horatio before the events depicted in *The Spanish Tragedy*. Two respected scholars have argued that parts of Kyd's 'comodey' survive in a short burlesque play, *The First Part of Ieronimo* (1605), performed by the Children of the Chapel.⁴⁴ The third play that came mostly from Kyd's pen, I shall argue, was *harey the vi*, performed on 3, 7, 11, and 28 March, 1592; 5, 13, and 21 April; 4, 7, 14, 19, and 25 May; 12 and 19 June. On 16 March, Henslowe noted simply receipts for *harey*, which could refer to another play in Strange's repertory, *harey of cornwell*. In the short winter season *harey the vj* was performed on 16 and 31 January 1593, in all a total of sixteen outings, with average receipts over £2.⁴⁵ Thus, of the 134 recorded performances by Strange's Men, thirty-nine, or more than a quarter, were of work by Kyd. If we add to this point his authorship of *Fair Em*, Kyd emerges as the foremost dramatist of Lord Strange's Men.

⁴⁴ Andrew S. Cairncross (ed.), [*The Spanish Comedy, or*] *The First Part of Hieronimo and The Spanish Tragedy* [or *Hieronimo is Mad Again*] (London, 1967); Erne, *Beyond The Spanish Tragedy*, pp. 14–46.

⁴⁵ *HD*, pp. 16–20.

Another important detail that theatre historians have missed concerning Kyd the playwright is the fact that he alone of the four known dramatists whose work was performed by Strange's Men served their patron in another capacity. He was employed by Strange from about 1588 to 1593, until the Dutch Libel affair caused his precipitate dismissal. Kyd's loyalty to his patron can be seen from the prominence that he and his co-author Nashe gave to the character of Talbot, a distinguished ancestor of Strange, who appears only in this play among the surviving corpus of Elizabethan drama. An additional fact, not often noted, is that Nashe had just as much reason to praise Lord Strange as Kyd, for in the summer of 1592 Strange became Nashe's patron. In *Pierce Pennilesse* (entered in the Stationers' Register on 8 August 1592), Nashe celebrated those 'patrons and Benefactors' whose 'exceeding bountie and liberalitie' provide writers with material support, singling out 'thou, most courteous Amyntas'.⁴⁶ McKerrow recorded that, long ago, 'Malone identified the Amintas of the present passage with Ferdinando Stanley ... who is alluded to under the same pastoral name in Spenser's *Colin Clout*, 1595'; an identification with which F. P. Wilson concurred.⁴⁷ It is no coincidence that Kyd and Nashe should have elevated Talbot to such eminence, and added a complete list of all the titles which Lord Strange's ancestor had earned, including the obscure distinction, 'Lord Strange of Blackmere' (4.7.65). Nashe's authorship of Act 1 of *1 Henry VI* has been firmly settled,⁴⁸ and it will be further documented in Volume 2 of this edition, where detailed evidence will be provided for Kyd's authorship of Acts 2–5 of *1 Henry VI*, and Shakespeare's responsibility for three scenes (2.4, 4.2, 4.5), added at some stage after the Lord Chamberlain's Men acquired the play in 1594. The second volume of this edition will also produce strong evidence that Kyd and Shakespeare co-authored *Edward III* in 1593, with Shakespeare responsible for the King's adulterous wooing of the Countess of Salisbury (1.2–2.2) and the scene with Prince Edward and Audley on the eve of battle (4.4), while Kyd supplied the remainder of the play. Kyd's connection with Shakespeare, who edited one of his plays and co-authored another, must have been a major reason why Shakespeare agreed to write 'Additions' to *The Spanish Tragedy* in about 1599, appearing in print in the 1602 Quarto.

⁴⁶ *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. R. B. McKerrow, 5 vols, revised F. P. Wilson (Oxford, 1958), 1:243.

⁴⁷ Nashe, *Works*, IV:151, and F. P. Wilson's *Supplement* to Vol. V, pp. 15–16. Wilson convincingly argued that Nashe also dedicated *The Choice of Valentines* to Lord Strange (V:141, n. 1).

⁴⁸ See Brian Vickers, 'Incomplete Shakespeare: Or, Denying Co-authorship in *1 Henry VI*, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58 (2007): 311–52, esp. 328–39, 343–5.

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY AND ITS TRAVAILS

Kyd died in late summer 1594, just as the London theatres were entering a long and fruitful creative period, with fewer closures due to plague and more stability among the companies. Where previous narratives conveyed a picture of theatre owners being engaged in continual quarrels and disputes, recent theatre historians, led by Roslyn Knutson, have emphasized the spirit of co-operation that existed between the companies, making a valid comparison with the London guilds, sharing a common profession while competing for customers.⁴⁹ Yet, to pursue that commercial analogy, it is equally clear that the companies were engaged in competition with each other, trying to match each other's successes by commissioning new plays and mounting revivals.⁵⁰ A condition of rivalry, as well as co-operation, may have accompanied *The Spanish Tragedy* in the theatre. The London theatres were closed due to the plague for two long periods, from 23 June to 29 December 1592, and from 1 February to 27 December 1593. During this hiatus some companies survived by touring, others were bankrupted. Strange's Men seem to have split up during the winter of 1593–4, following Strange's death, for when the Rose theatre reopened on 27 December it was with Sussex's Men.⁵¹ By May 1594 part of the company had gone with Edward Alleyn to the Lord Admiral's Men, including Thomas Downton. The other part, comprising Richard Cowley, Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, George Bryan, John Heminges, and Will Kempe, joined the newly founded Chamberlain's Men. In some cases when a company broke up there was a clear division of the playbooks, but with *The Spanish Tragedy* it is possible that both companies claimed the right to perform Kyd's play, since it had not previously been claimed by any other company.

The play's remarkable popularity, with nearly 120 contemporary allusions, reflects its ubiquity in theatres of all kinds throughout this period. In 1975 D. F. Rowan noted that '*The Spanish Tragedy* was mounted on a wide variety of temporary and permanent stages over a period of at least fifty

⁴⁹ Roslyn L. Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 21–47.

⁵⁰ See Roslyn L. Knutson, 'Play Identifications: *The Wise Men of Westchester* and *John a Kent* and *John a Cumber*; *Longshanks* and *Edward I*, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 47 (1984): 1–11; 'Influence of the Repertory System on the Revival and Revision of *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Dr. Faustus*', *English Literary Renaissance* 18 (1988): 257–74; 'Toe to Toe across Maid Lane: Repertorial Competition at the Rose and Globe, 1599–1600', in P. Nelsen and J. Schlueter (eds), *Acts of Criticism: Performance Matters in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Madison, NJ, 2006), pp. 21–37.

⁵¹ *HD*, pp. 20–1.

years.⁵² In addition to its stagings at the Rose from 1592 to 1597, Rowan observed,

As a property of Strange's Men it could have been acted as well at the Cross Keys Inn, The Theatre and at Newington Butts. As an Admiral's play it was certainly acted at the Fortune, and again possibly at The Theatre and Newington Butts. There is some evidence – centred on Richard Burbage in the role of Hieronimo – to associate the play with the Chamberlain/King's Men. If this evidence, suggesting multiple auspices for the play, be accepted, then the Curtain, the First Globe and possibly the Second Blackfriars can be added to the list. (pp. 113–14)

It was certainly acted on provincial tours; indeed Dekker reminded Jonson that he, too, had once had the starring role. In *Satiro-mastix, or The untrussing of the Humorous Poet* (1602), Captain Tucca, the principal satirist attacking Jonson (in the figure of Horace), taunts him: 'thou hast forgot how thou amblest (in leather pilch) by a play-wagon, in the high way, and took'st mad Jeronimoes part', also recalling 'when thou ranst mad for the death of Horatio'.⁵³

A 'PROLIFERATION' OF *HIERONYMOS*?

Knutson has stated that actors in the 1570s and 1580s 'developed business guidelines for themselves, one of which was that a company should not acquire a script of another company and perform it as its own, even when that script had been published. When the protocol of ownership was abused, the violated company shamed the offender publicly, thus pressuring an adherence to normative practice'.⁵⁴ This may be true if the play

⁵² D. F. Rowan, 'The Staging of *The Spanish Tragedy*', in G. R. Hibbard (ed.), *The Elizabethan Theatre* V (Hamden, CT, 1975), pp. 112–23, at p. 113.

⁵³ *Satiro-mastix*, 4.1.130–2 and 1.2.355–6, in Fredson Bowers (ed.), *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, 4 vols (Cambridge, 1953–61), 1:351, 326. In his companion *Introductions, Notes, and Commentaries* to the Bowers edition, 4 vols (Cambridge, 1980, 2009), Cyrus Hoy notes the reference to 'Jonson's performance as Hieronimo ... presumably both as a strolling player and at Paris Garden, in his acting days' (1:226).

⁵⁴ Knutson, *Playing Companies*, p. 42. She only cites one instance of this 'normative practice', 'the reaction of the King's Men to the acquisition of their play, "Jeronimo," by the Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars. As the Induction to *The Malcontent* makes clear, the King's Men justified their taking of the Blackfriars play as revenge for the theft of their own' (ibid.). For a full account of this episode see Lukas Erne, *Beyond The Spanish Tragedy*, who argues convincingly that the play mocked by the Children in their play, *The First Part of Jeronimo. With the Wars of Portugal, and the Death of Don Andrea* (1605), was *The Comedy of Don Horatio*, 'a forepiece to, or [constituting] a two-part play with *The Spanish Tragedy*' (pp. 14–46).

had been sold to a company, but there were exceptions, when an individual was the seller. As long ago as 1891, F. G. Fleay had traced the 'migration' of *Fair Em* to Sussex's Men by way of Alleyn, a member of Strange's Men in 1592.⁵⁵ Earlier in his career (1583), Alleyn purchased a handful of plays from Richard Jones, who was selling them on behalf of Worcester's Men, who were breaking up at that point.⁵⁶ Knutson herself drew attention to Alleyn's later activities as a trader in playbooks in his business dealings with the Admiral's Men.⁵⁷ On 22 August 1601, he sold them *Mahomet*, followed by *The Wise Man of West Chester* on 19 September and *Vortigern* on 20 November, each at the standard price of 40 shillings (£2). On 18 January 1602, Henslowe paid £6 for 'iii boockes w^{ch} wer played', namely *The French Doctor*, *The Massacre at Paris*, and *Crack Me this Nut*. On 8 August, he 'paid unto my sone EA' £4 for *Philip of Spain* and *Longshanks*, and on 2 October he paid £2 'unto my sonne EAlleyn at the Apoyment of the company for his Boocke of *Tamar Cham*'.⁵⁸

In their book on Lord Strange's acting company, Sally-Beth MacLean and Lawrence Manley recorded how several plays 'passed through the hands of Alleyn or Henslowe back into the repertory of the rejuvenated Lord Admiral's Men, including *The Spanish Tragedy*, *The Jew of Malta*, *Tamar Cham*, and *The Massacre at Paris*.⁵⁹ MacLean and Manley noted that 'no edition of [*The Spanish Tragedy*] attributes it to any acting company' (p. 79), not even the 1602 Quarto, containing the 'Additions' that Shakespeare notionally wrote for the Chamberlain's Men, which describes itself as 'Newly corrected, amended, and enlarged with new additions of the Painters part and others, as it hath of late been divers times acted'.⁶⁰ Lacking the proprietorial statement by any company, it may have existed in what we would describe today as 'the public domain'. It is worth repeating MacLean and Manley's

⁵⁵ See F. G. Fleay, *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559–1642*, 2 vols (London, 1891), 2:282.

⁵⁶ I am grateful to Professor Susan Cerasano for some helpful discussions of Alleyn. As she commented, 'later in his career, Alleyn owned many plays that he sold to other companies with which he performed and/or managed. We could say that, in all of this, the plays were *travelling with Alleyn*. That is, they were plays in which he was performing, or had performed, and in which he had a major role. When he no longer needed, or wanted them, he sold them off. Consequently, the books seem to be moving erratically from company to company when, in reality, they would have been moving with the actor' (email, 8 August 2023).

⁵⁷ See Knutson, *The Repertory of Shakespeare's Company 1594–1613* (Fayetteville, 1991), pp. 36, 49, 90.

⁵⁸ For identification of these plays, see *HD*, pp. 180, 181, 184, 187, 204, 205, 217, and Neil Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge, 1988).

⁵⁹ *Lord Strange's Men*, p. 77, also pp. 86, 88, 381, n. 60.

⁶⁰ Greg, *BEPD* #110 (d); 1:188–9.

conclusion that ‘Like other plays in the repertory of Lord Strange’s Men, which collapsed in 1593, *The Spanish Tragedy* subsequently became a property of Henslowe or of the Lord Admiral’s Men, who revived it in January 1596/97 and again, in collaboration with Pembroke’s Men, in October 1597.’⁶¹ In which case, they evidently went on using Kyd’s original play.

In a recent essay, however, devoted to theatre history, among other topics, H. Schott Syme has argued that the Admiral’s Men commissioned a revised version from some unknown dramatist.⁶² Although he knows, and quotes from, the work of Knutson,⁶³ Maclean and Manley, Syme ignores their considered arguments and the evidence they cite. He bases his new claim on two details in Henslowe’s *Diary*, the first of which he relegated to a footnote, as if to avoid attention:

For convenience’s sake, I will refer to the Strange’s Men play as ‘Jeronymo’ (the most frequent spelling) and to the Admiral’s Men as ‘Joronymo’ (the more frequent spelling in this second set of records). (p. 9, n. 27)

Scholars familiar with Henslowe’s notoriously variable spelling may well think that to base any categorical distinction on such evidence is a mark of extreme self-confidence, or recklessness. For the record, in the 1592–3 season Henslowe spelled the title ‘Jeronymo’ fifteen times, ‘Joronymo’ four times. In the 1597 season Henslowe spelled ‘Jeronymo’ once, ‘Joronymo’ seven times, indeed more frequently. But he also referred to it as ‘Joreneymo’ and ‘Joronemo’ twice each. On such orthographic instability no serious argument can be based.

The second detail that Syme takes as supporting his thesis concerns the fact that Henslowe marked the first performance of this play in that season (29 January 1597) with the enigmatic term ‘ne’.⁶⁴ Scholars have debated the meaning of this term for over a century, suggestions including ‘new’, for a new play, or ‘ne’ for a ‘newly refurbished’ performance, or one ‘newly licensed’. Syme takes a new line altogether: ‘Henslowe’s “ne” marker’ ... [suggests] that this was not the old *Spanish Tragedy*, but a new play based on the Hieronimo character’ (p. 9). But he fails to produce any evidence that such a play existed.

Syme’s subsequent discussion of ‘ne’ (pp. 10–32) disputes the received explanations by Greg, Chambers, and many more recent scholars with a

⁶¹ Op. cit., p. 79.

⁶² See Syme, *Theatre History, Attribution Studies, and the Question of Evidence* (Cambridge, 2023).

⁶³ See *ibid.*, p. 91: ‘Ros Knutson has seen, dissected, helped to reassemble, and prodded along more versions of this text than I dare admit. [It] would not exist without her or her work.’

⁶⁴ *HD*, p. 55.

degree of detail that defies summary, and some special pleading (or, as he puts it, 'judicious speculation', p. 27). Having attempted to establish 'a sense of dwindling probability that "ne" meant anything other than "a newly licensed play," and that in every instance but the highly atypical "Alexander and Lodowick" that meant "a new play"', he claims that we should accept Henslowe's entry at face value. But this immediately raises other problems:

If 'Joronymo' was in fact *The Spanish Tragedy*, we might wonder *why the Admiral's Men thought they had to revise it ...* The Admiral's Men evidently felt no need to revise other old plays with established track records: they reintroduced *Doctor Faustus* without revisions in the autumn of 1594, for instance, and kept staging the play, unrevised, twenty-three more times ... (p. 30; my italics)

The passage I have italicised is a blatant example of 'begging the question', or *petitio principii*, assuming the point that you are trying to prove – but he introduced it with 'if', and there is much virtue in 'if'. The fact that the company saw no reason to revise *Dr Faustus* might have caused Syme to doubt his thesis. He returns to Henslowe, however, trying to catch his opponents on the horns of a dilemma:

Explaining away Henslowe's 'ne' makes 'Joronymo' highly idiosyncratic. Alternatively, the case was utterly conventional: a play marked 'ne' because when first performed, it had recently been commissioned and written. Either 'Joronymo' is the most unusual entry in the *Diary*, or it is not unusual at all. (p. 31)

Experienced readers will not accept this reduction of the issue to a simple binary question. There is more here than either or.

Syme regularly forces his arguments, especially those from analogy. Knutson introduced the idea of 'reportorial clusters', the existence of two or more plays on such subjects as Richard III, Henry V, Tamar Cham, and Hamlet,⁶⁵ to which Syme devotes much space (pp. 32–56). Of course, however many of these clusters are amassed, it does not prove that they included 'Hieronymo' plays. Syme observes that the story of Friar Bacon exists in a second version (*John of Bordeaux*) but speculates that there may have been 'three distinct plays', by the workings of 'polyreferentiality' (p. 41). He also observes that 'the fragmentary evidence allows for a proliferation of possible narratives', such as there being three versions of *The Spanish Tragedy* (p. 48). In that case incomplete evidence would allow infinite speculation, and knowledge would be seriously damaged. But one early meaning of 'proliferation' described the excessive unchecked growth

⁶⁵ See Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time*, p. 58.

of a plant, resulting in its infertility. Fortunately, Syme can only proliferate speculative narratives, not material texts.

In his introduction Syme announced that Section 3 would discuss ‘a complex of plays about Hieronimo, most of which are lost’ (p. 11). Faced with the absence of texts, many scholars would recall Wittgenstein’s principle, ‘*Wovon man nicht reden kann, darüber muss man schweigen*.’⁶⁶ But Syme flourishes in the freedom this absence gives him, devoting a third of his text to discussing ‘The Hieronimo Complex’ (pp. 56–87). Occasionally his argument gives way to optimistic assertion. Having quoted Richard Dutton’s ruling that ‘the Master of the Revels would not have licensed the same text for two companies [since] “Performing rights were specific and exclusive”’, Syme states that ‘it seems *overwhelmingly likely* that the “*specific and exclusive*” license the Admiral’s Men *acquired in January 1597*, as the “ne” tag *probably confirms*, was for *their own Hieronimo script*’ (p. 59). Every word that I have italicised is speculation. In any case the assertion is untrue that the company acquired a licence, since *The Spanish Tragedy* was never tied to any specific company. As I suggested earlier, its obscure origin in the 1580s may have placed it in the public domain. If it had been an Admiral’s Men property, William White and Thomas Pavier would never have dared to publish the 1602 Quarto ‘as it hath of late been diuers times acted’, without specific acknowledgement to any company. If it had needed a licence in 1592, either Henslowe or Alleyn could have bought one, and would not have needed to pay the fee twice over. Also, as Susan Cerasano has reminded me,

Henslowe occasionally mentions paying a fee for the licensing of a play, but never for ‘re-licensing’ a play. It seems to me that the clear understanding is that if the Master of the Revels read and licensed a particular version of a play that some slight changes might be made to it, but that major alterations were strictly *verboten*. If this had not been the case then the entire process of licensing would have been undermined by companies that paid for one license and then went on to do whatever they wanted to change a text. It would have been totally unacceptable to the government, especially to one that was placing its faith in the ability to control what occurred on the stage (to some great extent) by requiring the license in the first place.⁶⁷

Further, it would have been highly inconvenient if the scribe had had to produce a new Booke, copy out new parts, and for the actors to learn new lines. The situation in *Hamlet*, where the visiting players are asked to learn

⁶⁶ *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (1918), preface and conclusion (7): “What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.”

⁶⁷ Cerasano, email 8 August 2023.

a single insertion, can be taken as the norm. It has seldom been observed that the 320 lines, in five separate inserts, that Shakespeare seems to have written for the 1602 Quarto, billed as ‘with new additions of the Painters part, and others’ – some of which are additions, others substitutions of new material, or both – must have posed a major problem for the company to absorb.⁶⁸

There is evidence of only two reworkings of *The Spanish Tragedy*, one commissioned, but not extant, the other extant but with no declaration of authorship or occasion. On 25 September 1601, Henslowe lent ‘unto Bengemen Johnson upon his writtinge of his adicians in geronymo the some of 40 shillings’ (£2). Further, on 22 June 1602, Henslowe ‘Lent unto bengemy Johnstone ... in earnest of A Boocke called Richard crockbacke & for new adicyons for Jeronymo the some of £10’.⁶⁹ The larger sum includes an advance for a whole play, which might be for £2, leaving a substantial sum for the additions. Nothing further is known about either text, but the fact that Henslowe specified ‘additions’ may be due to him or Jonson having heard rumours of the imminent publication in 1602 of a new edition by a rival company. Some scholars have attributed these additional passages to Jonson, but a considerable amount of evidence, both external (several contemporary allusions linking the play with the Chamberlain’s Men) and internal (nearly one hundred collocations uniquely shared with other of his plays and poems), suggests that Shakespeare was their author.⁷⁰ But this was still Kyd’s play, not a complete reworking of it.

Syme seems oblivious to the limited evidence of substantive alterations. Any mention of the play or its main character could be proof of a new version. Dekker’s jesting reference to Jonson playing Hieronimo on tour and at Paris Garden – the Swan theatre – provokes Syme to a long discussion of Pembroke’s Men, culminating in the ‘persuasive’ proposition that ‘the repertory of Pembroke’s Men, like that of the Admiral’s Men, contained

⁶⁸ In their edition Clara Calvo and Jesus Tronch describe the first ‘addition’ (54 lines) showing Hieronimo already becoming ‘deranged much earlier than in Q1’ (p. 178); the second addition is an ‘11-line fragment’ (p. 197), the third addition, a 47-line speech by Hieronimo dispraising sons, is ‘awkwardly misplaced’ (p. 233). The fourth and longest (167 lines), the celebrated scene with the painter, ‘was probably meant to substitute for the whole of 3.13’ (p. 245). The fifth (49 lines) is ‘an addition-substitution’ (p. 311).

⁶⁹ *HD*, pp. 182, 203.

⁷⁰ See Warren Stevenson, *Shakespeare’s Additions to Thomas Kyd’s ‘The Spanish Tragedy’: A Fresh Look at the Evidence Regarding the 1602 Additions* (Lewiston, NY, 2008); Brian Vickers, ‘Identifying Shakespeare’s Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* (1602): A New(er) Approach’, *Shakespeare* 8 (2012): 13–43, and ‘Shakespeare and the 1602 Additions to *The Spanish Tragedy*: A Method Vindicated’, *Shakespeare* 13 (2017): 101–6.

their own treatment of the Hieronimo story' (pp. 66–75). A 'piece of scrap paper from the Revels' Office dating from between 1615 and 1621' lists 'The Tradgedy of Jeronimo' alongside several other plays being considered for performance at court during the Christmas season. For Syme, the document's failure to 'identify *which* Hieronimo play it means' (p. 64; author's italics) opens the door to various candidates, of which Syme prefers 'a play owned by the Palgrave's Men, written in 1597, rewritten by Jonson in 1601–2, and still in their repertory at the Fortune two decades later' (p. 65). Where is the evidence that such a play ever existed?

Having scattered around simulacra of Kyd's play like a latter-day sorcerer's apprentice, in the closing pages of his essay Syme adds a seventh author, perhaps the most insubstantial yet. In 1675 Edward Phillips, Milton's nephew, published an unreliable compilation, *Theatrum poetarum Anglicanorum: containing brief characters of the English poets*, in which he listed one William Smith as 'the author of a Tragedy entituled *Hieronymo* as also *The Hector of Germany*'. Syme objects that, while Smith did write the latter play, 'in the late 1580s he was living in Chester, writing works of antiquarian interest' (pp. 88–9). However, there was another 'W. Smith' to be considered, the minor playwright Wentworth Smith (b. 1571), whom Henslowe paid fifteen times between 1601 and 1603 as a co-author with Richard Hathway, John Day and others.⁷¹ Little is known about him, but Syme assures us that 'he was certainly old enough to write a play for the Admiral's Men in 1597' – as were doubtless many other dramatists. Syme attempts to account for his absence from Henslowe's records before 1601:

That his name does not appear in Henslowe's records for the first three years in which they contain payments to playwrights may not be significant. Some writers, including Jonson, disappear from the 'Diary' for years at a time. *The specifics of what we know about 'Joronimo'* might even explain Smith's absence: after all, the novice playwright who managed to turn a new Hieronimo play into a commercial mediocrity was perhaps not a prime candidate for immediate rehire. (p. 89; my italics)

That was a speculative argument – this essay abounds in *if, may, might, perhaps, could, might have been* – but I have italicised Syme's reference to so-called 'specifics' to show his ability to turn speculation into fact. He ends with an intended irony at his own expense: "Wentworth Smith the Author of a Tragedy entituled *Hieronymo*" is little more than reckless speculation, but it is a possible answer to two puzzles, namely 'Who wrote a play about Hieronimo for the Admiral's Men in 1597?', and 'why did Edward Phillips' ascribe to 'a man called Smith' a play called *Hieronymo*? The phrase 'reckless

⁷¹ See Chambers, *ES*, 3:393–4 and Carson, *A Companion to Henslowe's Diary*, Index, p. 147.

speculation' is dangerous in this context since some readers may not detect the self-irony.

It is hard to know what Syme hoped to achieve with this essay. In his Acknowledgements he relates that 'It began life as a blog post and then languished in a virtual drawer as an overlong article before being given a chance to reinvent itself' by the editors of this series. It announces its triple focus, 'Theatre History', 'Attribution Studies' (where?), and 'Evidence', but is deficient in each area. Good scholarship leaves a topic better understood, in a form that others can build on, but Syme leaves it in a state of confusion, a procession of speculations, suppressed information, forced arguments, and phantom texts. *The Spanish Tragedy* is not illuminated.

Coincidentally, Ben Jonson provides the final piece of evidence concerning Kyd's career in the London theatres. In his eulogy on Shakespeare, published in the First Folio (1623), Jonson places Kyd among other contemporaries outclassed by Shakespeare:

For, if I thought my judgement were of yeeres,
I should commit thee surely with thy peeres,
And tell, how farre thou didst our Lyly out-shine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowes mighty line. (27–30)

Jonson's epithet 'sporting' may suggest that Kyd also wrote comedies; Dekker's epithet had been 'industrious', a term hardly merited by the canon of three plays which have come down to us. Both contemporary witnesses encourage the thought that Kyd's output may have been far greater. We know of many lost plays in Shakespeare's age from surviving records of their titles,⁷² and it is not unlikely that the anonymously published plays of the period include as yet unrecognized work by Kyd.

One of the historic obstacles to forming a clear picture of Kyd's achievement as a dramatist has always been the smallness of his recognized oeuvre: two plays from the public theatre (*The Spanish Tragedy*, *Soliman and Perseda*) and one closet tragedy translated from the French are not much to go on. But that is not the whole story. My co-editors join me in enlarging his canon by ascribing to him sole authorship of three plays published anonymously: *Fair Em*, *King Leir*, and *Arden of Faversham*, and part authorship of *1 Henry VI* and *Edward III*. These claims will no doubt provoke some scepticism, not least because of the mastery of a wide range of genres that would be implied, from an Italianate revenge tragedy to a 'Turkish' revenge tragedy, a citizen tragedy, a romantic chronicle play, and two English history plays.

⁷² See, e.g., Gertrude M. Sibley, *The Lost Plays and Masques, 1500–1642* (Ithaca, NY, 1933) and C. J. Sisson, *Lost Plays of Shakespeare's Age* (Cambridge, 1936). In 2009 Roslyn Knutson and David McInnis founded the excellent *Lost Plays Database*: see now <https://lostplays.folger.edu>.

However, Peele also produced six plays in widely different genres: a mythological pastoral, *The Arraignment of Paris* (1584); a Marlovian tragedy, *The Battle of Alcazar* (1588); two English history plays, *The Troublesome Reign of King John* (1589) and *Edward I* (1591); a biblical tragedy, *David and Bathsheba* (1590); and the unclassifiable *Old Wife's Tale* (1592). We are seldom encouraged to take Shakespeare's predecessors seriously, but it is time that scholars, ordinary readers, and theatre directors realized that Peele and Kyd were major innovators, playwrights of great flexibility, pioneers at a time when English drama was beginning to show its enormous possibilities.

AFTERWORD: THE ROSE THEATRE REDISCOVERED

On 24 March 1585 Philip Henslowe leased a plot of land about ninety-four feet square on the east corner of Maiden Lane (now Park Street) and Rose Alley, SE1. Two years later he hired John Griggs, a carpenter, to build the Rose Playhouse, which became the first of the Bankside theatres. It opened in 1587 with no recorded acting company and may have been used for other popular entertainment. It has recently been suggested that the original structure had no stage, being used for bear-baiting. Between February and April 1592 Henslowe spent well over £108 enlarging the Rose, partly to increase his audience but also to improve the building's theatrical functions. Although Henslowe recorded his expenditure on material and labour, he left no account of his alterations. Calculating the dimensions of Elizabethan theatres has always been problematic, with estimates based on rough and ready calculations from the few engravings that survive, or on the verbal reports of foreign travellers. It was not until excavations by English Heritage and the Museum of London archaeology departments uncovered the Rose's foundations in February 1989 that scholars were able to match a physical building with the inadequate pictorial record.⁷³ Architects and theatre historians found enough evidence to reconstruct both the 1587 structure and Henslowe's 1592 alterations. The first Rose was shown to be a rough polygon with fourteen sides, consisting of three tiers of roofed galleries (see the sketch by C. Walter Hodges, Fig. 2). The unexpected geometry of a fourteen-sided figure derived from Albrecht Dürer's 1520 publication of a

⁷³ For my description of these reconstructions, I have relied on Herbert Berry's account of 'The Rose', *EPT*, pp. 419–36; John Orrell and Andrew Gurr, 'What the Rose can tell us', *Antiquity* 63 (1989): 421–9; Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespeare Stage 1574–1642*, 3rd edn (Cambridge, 1992); Julian Bowsher, *The Rose Theatre, an Archaeological Discovery*, with a 'Postscript' by C. Walter Hodges (London, 1998); Jon Greenfield and Andrew Gurr, 'The Rose Theatre, London: The State of Knowledge and What We Still Need to Know', *Antiquity* 89 (2004): 330–40.



Fig. 1. Photo of the excavation of Rose Playhouse by the Museum of London Archaeology Unit, 1989.

method for dividing a circle into seven equal parts.⁷⁴ The building's diameter was seventy-two feet, making it smaller than some later theatres.

⁷⁴ See Greenfield and Gurr, 'The Rose Theatre, London', pp. 334–5; Simon Blatherwick and Andrew Gurr, 'Shakespeare's Factory: Archeological Evaluations on the Site of the Globe Theatre at 1/15 Anchor Terrace, Southwark Bridge Road, Southwark', *Antiquity* 66 (1992): 315–33, a report on some trial work carried out by the Museum

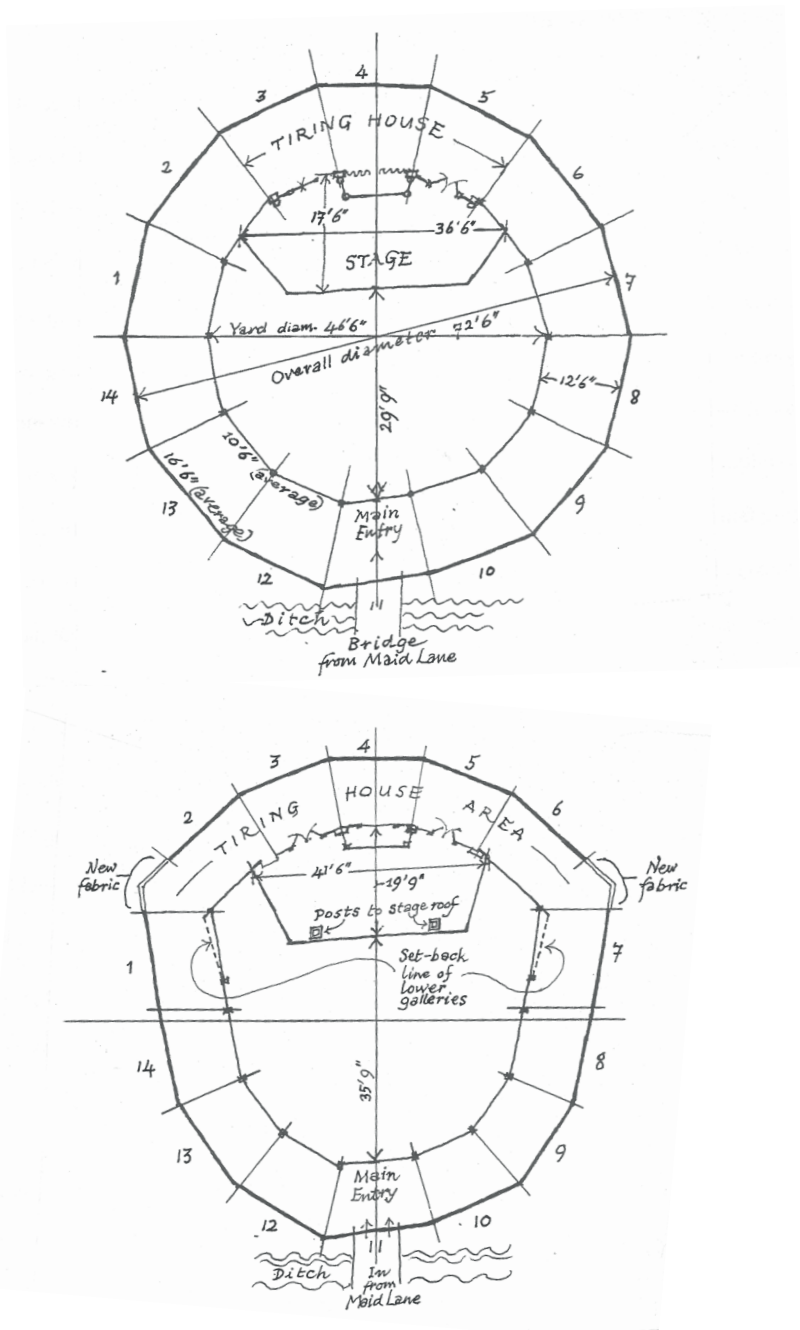


Fig. 2. Sketch of the ground plan of the Rose theatre, 1587 and 1592, by Walter Hodges, based on the 1989 excavations. Reproduced by permission of the Estate of C. W. Hodges.

In the 1592 alterations Henslowe slightly enlarged the theatre to the north, taking down the original outer wall, dismantling the wooden structure and rebuilding it on new foundations further north. The galleries were stretched by six or seven feet on either side of the stage, changing the original polygonal structure into an elongated, ovoid shape. It has been estimated that he increased the occupation of the galleries from 1,400 to 1,650 seated spectators and that of those standing in the yard from 606 to 775, giving a total of 2,425 spectators.⁷⁵ Henslowe improved the internal structure, changing the aspect of sight-lines from the galleries at the side of the stage. He also erected two columns at the front of the stage to support a roof over the stage, perhaps with machinery to lower props, and he enlarged the 'tiring house', the actors' changing rooms and other offices.

The detail of most interest to theatre and literary scholars is the size and shape of the stage. We know from the original building contracts that in 1587 the Red Lion's stage was thirty feet deep and forty feet across, while the Fortune's stage was twenty-seven-and-a-half feet deep and forty-three feet across. The Rose's was thirty-seven-and-a-half feet across at the rear, tapering to twenty-seven-and-a-half feet at the front, and fifteen-and-a-half feet deep. For the 1592 alterations Henslowe kept the taper of the stage (as far as we know, all other stages were rectangular) but increased the depth to seventeen feet. Compared to other stages, that of the Rose was smaller and significantly shallow in relation to its width. Yet these dimensions gave the Rose a certain advantage over other theatres. While it could not accommodate as many actors in crowd scenes or battles, the internal shallow stage meant that the actors would be standing nearer the audience. The tapering form also had a funnelling effect, projecting both sound and gesture towards the spectators. This closer contact must have given even greater impact to Edward Alleyn in such roles as Tamburlaine, Barabas, Titus Andronicus, Dr Faustus, Hieronimo, and John Talbot in *1 Henry VI*. Alleyn's acting style has been attacked, and defended.⁷⁶ I imagine that the

of London between 1989 and 1991 on the site of the Globe. The remains of the outer gallery wall 'prove that they formed a polygon' having twenty sides (p. 326).

⁷⁵ R. A. Foakes gave slightly different figures in 'The Discovery of the Rose Theatre: Some Implications', *Shakespeare Survey* 43 (1991): 141–8.

⁷⁶ See, e.g., the sympathetic estimate by William Armstrong, 'Shakespeare and the Acting of Edward Alleyn', *Shakespeare Survey* 7 (1954): 82–9, and the notably unsympathetic one by Andrew Gurr, 'Who Strutted and Bellowed?', *Shakespeare Survey* 16 (1963): 95–102. It is an easy, but unjustified, assumption that Shakespeare wrote Hamlet's advice to the players to comment on real contemporary actors rather than to criticize general faults that actors are prone to. It is a further error to assume that he intended to mock Alleyn. Gurr accused him of inventing 'the Red Bull style' of acting (p. 98). Yet that theatre has been undeservedly dismissed as crude

effect, together with the closer acoustic of a smaller, wood-built theatre, would have been of terrifying intensity. Two theatre historians have evoked the Rose's 'timber-framed structure of roofed galleries surrounding the yard where people stood around to hear Edward Alleyn roaring Marlowe's mighty lines'.⁷⁷

The first excavations lasted from February to April 1989, uncovering only 10 per cent of the structure. Since then, the Rose Theatre Trust has been founded as a pressure group to launch further excavations of the eastern section of the site. It is exciting to think that the stage where Kyd enjoyed his greatest successes in 1592–3 can now be seen anew.

Staging at the Rose

Another method of defining the internal fittings of a theatre is to review the stage directions of plays known to have been performed there. Scott McMillin did this for the Rose theatre in the 1590s on the basis of 'more than three dozen published or manuscript plays',⁷⁸ including Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, *King Leir*, and (co-authored) *1 Henry VI*; Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, *The Massacre of Paris*, *Dr Faustus*, and *The Jew of Malta*; Peele's *David and Bathsheba*, perhaps *The Battle of Alcazar* (Henslowe records a 'Muly Molocco' and 'Mahomet'), and *Titus Andronicus* (co-authored with Shakespeare). A number of these plays depend on the theatre having a raised area for acting. They call for action to take place 'above' or 'aloft';⁷⁹ 'on the walls'.⁸⁰ In *The Spanish Tragedy* the ghost of Andrea and Revenge may sit in the gallery, from where they utter their comments on the play's action. Yet these scenes include Andrea's lengthy opening narration (90 lines) and the play's conclusion (40 lines), which would be awkwardly delivered from above. It would be better if they sat at the side of the stage. In the play, while Horatio and Bel-Imperia declare their love, as McMillin noted (p. 28), "*Pedringano sheweth all to the Prince and Lorenzo, placing them in secret*" (760–1; Q lineation), from where they observe the action for 55 lines and Balthazar speak[s] from "*above*" (773). McMillin failed to note the stage direction '*A letter falleth*' (1180), evidently from an upstairs window, but he recorded that Bel-Imperia subsequently appears '*at a window*' (1680), from where she

and sensational. See now Eva Griffith, *A Jacobean Company and its Playhouse: The Queen's Servants at the Red Bull Theatre (c.1605–1619)* (Cambridge, 2013).

⁷⁷ Orrell and Gurr, 'What the Rose can tell us', p. 423.

⁷⁸ S. McMillin, *The Elizabethan Theatre and the Book of Sir Thomas More* (Ithaca, NY, and London, 1987), ch. 6, 'Staging at the Rose' (pp. 113–34, at 115). McMillin's case for *Sir Thomas More* being an Elizabethan play has been qualified by subsequent research into its diction and style, suggesting a date of c. 1603.

⁷⁹ See *Alc.*, DB; *Jew*; *Tit. A.*, 1H6.

⁸⁰ DB, *Tamb.*, 1H6.

speaks a ten-line soliloquy. In his preparations of the inset play of *Soliman and Perseda*, Hieronimo asks the Duke of Castile to place the royal 'train' ... into the gallerie' and then 'to throwe me downe the key' (2660–1). The stage direction duly follows: 'Enter Spanish King, Vice-Roy, the Duke of Castile, and their train' (2681–3), from where, as McMillin puts it, 'they observe action below, with some interaction among themselves, for 165 lines' (p. 126). McMillin failed to note that the Spanish and Portuguese nobility are in effect trapped in the gallery, unwilling captives witnessing the murders of their children and hearing Hieronimo's lengthy account of the events that have provoked this multiple revenge (2764–2844). Having justified his – and Bel-Imperia's – actions, Hieronimo '*runs to hang himself*' (2845), and the Portuguese Viceroy belatedly realizes: 'We are betraide, my Balthazar is slaine, | Breake ope the doores, runne save Hieronimo' (2848–9). Kyd's use of the gallery space in the Rose is typically inventive. As McMillin deduces from DeWitt's drawing of the Swan theatre,

The gallery seems to be a place for spectators or musicians, but one of its compartments could easily have been used for such small 'window' and 'wall' scenes ... The one or two characters in the raised position usually speak to others on the platform below. No depth is required for the raised area in other words. Characters there are *held* in relation to others on the platform. (p. 126; my italics)

I have italicised the verb that describes the norm for characters in these raised acting areas: Kyd is the only one of the Rose playwrights to turn that feature into an integral part of the dramatic action.

The other stage action common to all the Rose playwrights is the use of what McMillin called 'a curtained enclosure' (p. 114), or discovery space. Most of the Rose plays making use of this feature used a curtain (pp. 130–2), as did Peele's *David and Bathsheba*, where a curtain is drawn and Bathsheba is discovered with her maid, bathing. In *2 Tamburlaine*, '*The arras is drawn and Zenocrate lies in her bed of state*', attended by servants. In *The Jew of Malta*, there is '*A cauldron discovered*', within which Barabas, '*boiling, speaks his last*'. In *The Spanish Tragedy*, Hieronimo '*knocks up the curtain*' (2647) to arrange a discovery space for the corpse of Horatio, and after the denouement of his play within a play, he '*Shewes his dead sonne*' (2780). But Kyd had used another form of discovery space, a 'special property', as Gurr calls it, such as 'a curtained "booth" set up on stage, a kind of 'discovery booth', which 'would have had to be attached to the tiring house in some way, at a door, so that the objects and players could be changed without the audience seeing'.⁸¹ This category best fits Hieronimo's 'pleasant

⁸¹ Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1514–1642*, p. 149.

bower', as Bel-Imperia describes it: 'The Court were dangerous, that place is safe' (798–800). We see their next meeting, the scene set by Horatio:

Come Bel-Imperia let us to the bower,
And there in safetie pass a pleasant hower. (876–7; 2.4.4–5)

But Pedringano betrays them to Lorenzo and, alongside Balthazar and Serberine, they burst in when Lorenzo orders, 'Quickly dispatch my maisters', followed by the shocking stage directions: '*They hang him in the Arbor*' (917) and '*They stab him*' (920).

The arbour was probably a trellis-like structure, as shown in the 1602 Quarto. It was most likely a free-standing structure on the stage through-out,⁸² for in her mania Isabella decides to 'revenge my selfe upon the place | Where thus they murdered my beloved Sonne'. '*She cuts downe the Arbour*'. Isabella doesn't merely cut it down, she curses it with great force:

Down with these branches and these loathsome boughs
Of this unfortunate and fatal pine.
Down with them, Isabella, rend them up
And burn the roots from whence the rest is sprung.
I will not leave a root, a stalk, a tree,
A bough, a branch, a blossom, nor a leaf,
No, not an herb within this garden plot.
Accursed complot of my misery,
Fruitless for ever may this garden be. (4.2.6–15)

It is difficult to recall any other play in which the destruction of a stage property conveys such intensity of feeling. Isabella's act is futile in one sense, but also cathartic. The arbour represents a meeting place for love turned into a scene of death, a pollution of nature which Isabella must destroy before killing herself. It is a small gesture of defiance towards human perversion of a human code, an assertion of love and remembrance.

Kyd's final use of the Rose's stage resources is to 'knock up' a curtain, using a hammer and nails, to cover the space behind which a lifelike image of Horatio has been placed – presumably the same one that Hieronimo cut down after the murder (2.4.12). It may be a law of drama that whenever curtains are shown, a discovery must follow. (Compare Chekhov's famous advice to an author that if a pistol is seen hanging on a wall in Act 1, it must be used before the play ends.) The 'discovery' or display of his son's corpse gives Hieronimo the final chance to memorialize Horatio:

⁸² In their recent edition Calvo and Trench imagine it as a moveable structure: '[*An arbour set forth*]' at the beginning of 2.4 (p. 171) and '[*Arbour withdrawn*]' at the end (p. 184); similarly, at the beginning of 4.2: '[*Arbour set forth*]' (p. 294), but nothing at the end. This seems to me awkward, in theatrical terms.

See here my show, look on this spectacle.
Here lay any hope, and here my hope had end;
Here lay my heart, and here my heart was slain. (5.4.88–90)

Whatever resources the Rose could offer, Kyd made great use of them. We can celebrate the synergy between a playwright and his theatre.

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RECOGNIZING KYD

Brian Vickers

When I first started working on Thomas Kyd, some twenty years ago, I had no thought of enlarging his canon. My goal was to better understand his masterpiece, *The Spanish Tragedy* (written c. 1585, published 1592). I also studied the two other plays of accepted authorship, *Soliman and Perseda* (written c. 1588, published 1592), and *Cornelia*, translated from Garnier's *Cornélie* and published posthumously in 1594. Having a naturally inquisitive mind, I studied reference books and annual bibliographies to discover secondary literature on Kyd's life and works. As I worked through these sources, I noticed that other plays had been attributed over the years, some repeatedly, others only once or twice.

The play most often ascribed to him was *Arden of Faversham*, first made in 1903 by that knowledgeable scholar Charles Crawford, who in 1908 compiled by hand a *Concordance* to Kyd's three acknowledged plays.¹ Crawford had great expertise in identifying unattributed excerpts, as he showed in an exemplary edition of the 1600 verse anthology *England's Parnassus* (Oxford, 1913), in which he was able to identify over 3,000 of the quotations from anonymous poets and dramatists. His interleaved copy of another verse anthology, *Bodenham's Belvédère* (1600), identifying over 2,000 of the anthology's 4,400 quotations, has recently been published.² The fact that a scholar with these abilities ascribed *Arden of Faversham* to Kyd is of considerable significance. Crawford's pioneering identification was soon followed by the dissertation of Walter Miksch on 'The Authorship of *Arden of Faversham*', in which Miksch accepted Crawford's attribution

¹ See Crawford, 'The Authorship of *Arden of Faversham*', *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Shakespeare Gesellschaft* 39 (1903): 74–86, reprinted in Crawford, *Collectanea*, First Series (Stratford-on-Avon, 1906), 101–30; quotations from the later version; and *A Concordance to the Works of Thomas Kyd*, in W. Bang (ed.), *Materialen zur Kunde des älteren englischen Dramas*, vol. XIX (Louvain, 1908).

² See Lukas Erne and Devani Singh (eds), *Bel-vedère or The Garden of the Muses: An Early Modern Printed Commonplace Book* (Cambridge, 2020), and my assessment in *The Review of English Studies* 73 (2022): 593–6.

while adding many new matches between the play and Kyd. There were other contributions, English (H. Dugdale Sykes) and French (Felix Carrère),³ until in 1948 the great Danish scholar Paul Rubow, in his study of ‘Shakespeare and his contemporaries’, settled the attribution by listing over a hundred verbal matches with Kyd.⁴

The documentation in that paragraph will surprise many modern readers, who only know the attribution made by MacDonald Jackson in numerous publications over the last fifty years, according to which Shakespeare wrote scene 8. Jackson dismissed Crawford, unfairly, and completely ignored Rubow, even though M. L. Wine, in his Revels edition of *Arden* – Jackson’s preferred text – frequently cited Rubow in his commentary and included many of his identified Kyd matches in an appendix.⁵ As Dr Johnson might have said, ‘a scholar may ignore the evidence for a while, but others will rediscover it.’ Jackson’s arguments have been comprehensively refuted by myself and by Darren Freebury-Jones, who started later than me but finished earlier,⁶ and we hope that the edition and accompanying documentation in Volume 2 will convince all non-partisan readers.

The other sole-authored plays that I add to Kyd’s canon have a much smaller bibliography. *King Leir* was attributed to Kyd by another perceptive scholar writing before the second world war, William Wells, whose successes in attribution studies included identifying Middleton’s hand in *Timon of Athens*.⁷ For *Fair Em* I found a single hint in Rubow’s book, which handsomely rewarded further research.⁸

³ For the scholarly tradition identifying Kyd’s authorship of *Arden* see Brian Vickers, *Recovering Thomas Kyd: A canon restored* (Princeton, forthcoming), ch. 6.

⁴ See Paul V. Rubow, *Shakespeare og hans samtidige* (Copenhagen, 1948), pp. 108–44. Although the discussion is in Danish, all the quotations are in English, with full Act, scene, and line references. A reader with some knowledge of Kyd will have no difficulty in recognizing the matching passages. Since the original texts are found only in a few libraries, on my website, <https://brianvickers.uk/databases/arden-of-faversham/>, I have excerpted 50 matches from Crawford, 85 from Miksch, and 95 from Rubow.

⁵ See M. L. Wine (ed.), *The Tragedy of Master Arden of Faversham* (Manchester, 1973), pp. 141–7.

⁶ See Vickers, *Recovering Thomas Kyd*, ch. 8, and Darren Freebury-Jones, *Shakespeare’s Tutor: The influence of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester, 2022), esp. pp. 49–51, 65–79, 83–8. I am happy to say that Freebury-Jones has confirmed and extended my argument, adding new evidence.

⁷ William Wells, ‘The Authorship of “King Leir”’, *Notes and Queries* 177 (16 December 1939): 434–8. On his Middleton attributions see Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author: A Historical Study of Five Collaborative Plays* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 264–7, 269–89.

⁸ See Rubow, pp. 132–3, and now the essay by Freebury-Jones, ‘Possible Light on the Authorship of *Fair Em*’, *Notes and Queries* 262 (2017): 252–4.

My aim, emerging from my study of the historical scholarship, is to justify my attribution to him of sole authorship of these three plays published anonymously: *King Leir* (written c. 1589, published 1605), *Arden of Faversham* (written c. 1590, published 1592), and *Fair Em* (written c. 1590, published c. 1593). My reason for attributing these three plays is rather unusual. Normally, attributions are based on small-scale resemblances between the text of an anonymously published play and one or more plays of known authorship. Such resemblances can be of parallel phrases occurring in two plays by the same author and nowhere else in the drama of the period. Other stylistic resemblances can include distinctive uses of blank verse or rhyme. But my attributions to Kyd were based on large-scale resemblances, as I had noted when I first announced my discoveries.⁹ I noticed that all three plays include plot elements that are found in *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Soliman and Perseda*, namely murderous intrigues, the use of comedy in tragedy, and the presence of women ready to stab the man whom they – rightly or wrongly – accuse of having harmed them. Other Elizabethan dramatists may use one or other of these elements, but Kyd is the only one to use all three.

For the first, in *The Spanish Tragedy* there are three intrigues. Lorenzo hires accomplices to kill Horatio, so that his friend Balthazar may woo Horatio's beloved, Bel-Imperia. Secondly, in a subplot, set in the Portuguese court, the evil Villuppo gives false information to the Viceroy that his son has been killed in battle by Alexandro, who is arrested and condemned to death. But a true report arrives confirming that the son is still alive, so Alexandro is freed, and the evil courtier executed. Thirdly, in the main plot Hieronimo, the father of Horatio, joins with Bel-Imperia to avenge Horatio's murder. Hieronimo writes a play to be acted at the Spanish court on the story of Soliman and Perseda, in which all his enemies take part and are killed. Kyd returned to that story for his tragedy *Soliman and Perseda*, which uses one main intrigue. Erastus, having killed a man in a quarrel, flees from Rhodes to Constantinople, where the emperor Soliman accepts him as a friend. Perseda, Erastus's beloved, follows him to the Turkish court, where Soliman falls in love with her. Brusor, the emperor's bashaw, advises him to have Erastus killed, and they use Brusor's wife Lucina as a decoy to keep Perseda occupied. When Perseda discovers Lucina's betrayal she stabs her to death. In the final scene Perseda disguises herself in a man's armour to fight with Soliman. He kills her, but before dying she has her revenge on him with a poisoned kiss.

⁹ See Brian Vickers, 'Thomas Kyd, secret sharer', *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 April 2008, pp. 13–15.

In both tragedies Kyd introduces comic scenes in a tragic context. In *The Spanish Tragedy* Pedringano, one of the plotters hired by Lorenzo to kill Horatio, is brought to trial. Lorenzo has assured him that he will send his page with a pardon to be handed to the hangman on the scaffold. Left alone, the page tells the audience that Lorenzo has given him an empty box. Believing himself protected by the pardon, Pedringano insults the hangman outrageously in a very amusing manner, where the reader or theatregoer has difficulty stifling their laughter – until his hanging is simulated onstage. That is perhaps the first instance of black comedy in English drama. In *Soliman and Perseda* the cowardly braggart soldier Basilisco is a comic figure throughout, especially when Perseda asks him to kill Lucina, the woman who betrayed her husband. He takes a dagger, ‘*feels upon the point of it*’, and objects: ‘The point will mar her skin’ (5.3.49–50). Our amusement is short-lived.

In both tragedies Kyd introduces vengeful women. It was a common belief in Renaissance society that women were too tender-hearted to carry out a murder. But in *The Spanish Tragedy* Kyd shows Bel-Imperia’s determination to be revenged on the man who killed Horatio. Having been given the role of Perseda in Hieronimo’s play-within-the-play, Bel-Imperia succeeds in stabbing Balthazar before unexpectedly killing herself. In *Soliman and Perseda* the heroine, frustrated by Basilisco’s cowardice, says ‘What, darest thou not? Give me the dagger then!’, before stabbing Lucina (5.3.45–51). In the final scene Perseda receives her death stroke from Soliman, who had had her lover murdered, but kills him with a poisoned kiss.

All three of the plays I newly ascribe to Kyd have intrigue plots, two of them murderous. In *King Leir* Kyd follows the traditional story of the king dividing his kingdom between his three daughters but adds a plot by Leir to make the division dependent on his daughters’ choice of husbands. Since Gonorill and Ragan already have royal suitors, Leir reveals to his courtiers his plan to force Cordella to marry the King of Ireland, although she ‘vows | No liking to a monarch, unless love allows’ (1.59–66). Unfortunately for his ‘sudden stratagem’, the corrupt courtier Skalliger reveals it to Gonorill and Ragan, who easily manipulate the ceremony and have Cordella banished. While that story has a happy ending, turning into a pastoral romance, the main intrigue in the play is the evil daughters’ plot to have their father murdered. First Gonorill decides to ‘intercept the Messenger’ who travels between the two sisters and corrupt him (just as Lorenzo corrupted Pedringano) ‘With sweet persuasions, and with sound rewards’ (12.23–5), to murder Leir and his attendant, the good courtier Perillus. Ragan makes the same approach and the ‘*Messenger, or Murderer*’, as a stage-direction describes him, accepts both bribes and promises to complete the contract (12.106; 15.50). Within his intrigue plots Kyd is free to vary the importance

of the protagonists' roles. Here he shifts attention from the contract-giver to the hireling assassin who will carry out the hit, turning the Messenger into both a sinister and a comic figure, giving him more asides and soliloquies than any other character in his plays. In effect the Messenger provides a running commentary on his situation, full of black humour, enjoying his power to frighten his two victims, who we see through his eyes. He extracts more money from them, postponing their execution, until they manage to frighten him with fear of eternal damnation. Then he leaves them, unpunished, befitting the decorum of the play as it turns into a tragicomedy.

If Kyd innovated with the hireling assassin in *King Leir* he did so again with another recurrent feature of his plots, the role of vengeful woman. In his two tragedies both Bel-Imperia and Perseda acted that role with moral legitimacy, avenging the murder of their beloved partners on the men who had ordered their execution. (In Renaissance revenge plays both Christian morality and efficient legal systems are in abeyance.) But Gonorill and Ragan have no moral legitimacy in planning to murder Leir. Kyd had picked up this motive from a brief reference in William Warner's treatment of the Lear story in his poem *Albion's England* (1586) to a plot element that, with his interest in vengeful women, may have attracted Kyd to this story in the first place: 'Gonorill ... not only did attempt | Her father's death, but openly did hold him in contempt.' In his play she first orders Leir's murder, bribing the assassin. Ragan does the same, but Kyd gives her a far more violent nature. Not having seen or heard from the assassin she hired, Ragan widens her anger to take in the whole male sex:

A shame on these white-livered slaves, say I,
That with fair words so soon are overcome.
O God, that I had been but made a man,
Or that my strength were equal with my will!¹⁰
These foolish men are nothing but mere pity
And melt as butter doth against the sun.
Why should they have preeminence over us
Since we are creatures of more brave resolve? (25.13–20)

As throughout his playwriting career, Kyd put himself into the minds of his creations, imagining by what principles they motivate their actions.

He did this nowhere more successfully than with Alice Arden, who unites both roles of intriguer and vengeful woman. Her first speech when alone in scene 1, having just been informed that her husband will soon

¹⁰ Cf. Beatrice's (misplaced) anger at Claudio for having rejected Hero: 'O that I were a man! ... O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the marketplace ... O that I were a man for his sake! Or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into cur'sies ...', *Much Ado about Nothing*, 4.1.303–19.

be going to London on business, is to wish his death so that she can enjoy her lover:

Ere noon he means to take horse and away!
Sweet news is this! Oh, that some airy spirit
Would in the shape and likeness of a horse
Gallop with Arden 'cross the ocean
And throw him from his back into the waves!
Sweet Mosby is the man that hath my heart;
And he [Arden] usurps it, having nought but this:
That I am tied to him by marriage.
Love is a god and marriage is but words,
And therefore Mosby's title is the best. (1.92–101)

There Kyd economically makes it clear that, like Gonorill and Ragan, in planning to murder her husband Alice has no moral legitimacy. Several times within the play Kyd makes her utter that death wish, right up to the murder that finally takes place in scene 14, line 229, when she echoes Perse-da's command to Basilisco ('Give me the dagger then!') but in a much more gruesome context:

Alice [*To Arden*] What, groans thou? [*To Mosby*] Nay, then, give me the weapon.
[*To Arden*] Take this for hind'ring Mosby's love and mine.
[*Alice stabs Arden and he dies.*] (14.229–30)

In other Kyd plays the intriguer has at the most one or two associates. In *Arden* Kyd follows his source, Holinshed's 1587 *Chronicles*, but enlarges the cast of characters. Apart from Arden and his loyal friend Franklin, almost everyone else in the play is an accomplice of the two main plotters, Alice and Mosby. In *Leir* Kyd experimented with the role of the assassin, turning him into an entertainer; in *Arden* he turns the would-be murderers into farcical blunderers. The two professional assassins, Black Will and Shakebag, are primarily sources of laughter. They have a succession of failures, starting with a scene where Arden has been walking a turn in St Paul's, a common rendezvous for business deals. But the churchyard was also lined with booksellers' stalls, and just as Will is preparing to 'run [Arden] through' with his sword, a printer's apprentice shuts up shop: '*Then he lets he down his window, and it breaks Black Will's head*', leading to this comic exchange:

WILL Zounds, draw, Shakebag, draw! I am almost killed.
PRENTICE We'll tame you, I warrant.
WILL Zounds, I am tame enough already. (3.48–50)

Will's self-deflating reply shows the comic nature of his role, as the audience laughs both with and at him. Their subsequent failures include losing their prey in the fog, with Shakebag falling into a ditch; the murderers coming

to blows over their respective abilities as a 'cutter'; and being defeated in a swordfight by Arden and Franklin, who are just normal citizens. As the failures stack up, we may think they will never succeed, but the gruesome murder is all the more shocking.

Kyd innovates further with the role of intriguer. In *The Spanish Tragedy* Lorenzo acts as the ruthless Machiavellian, hiring killers whom he intends to get rid of as soon as their contract is fulfilled. As he contemptuously puts it:

They that for coin their souls endangered,
To save my life, for coin shall venture theirs;
And better 'tis that base companions die,
Than by their life to hazard our good haps.
Nor shall they live, for me to fear their faith:
I'll trust myself, myself shall be my friend;
For die they shall, slaves are ordained to no other end. (3.2.113–19)

In *Arden of Faversham*, as I observed, Alice and Mosby are the main plotters and we often see them together, discussing their plans and hopes of success. But Kyd shows Mosby alone, in a chilling soliloquy in which he reveals that, once Arden is dead, he intends to get rid of all his accomplices – Greene, Michael, the Painter:

Then, Arden, perish thou by that decree,
For Greene doth ear the land and weed thee up
To make my harvest nothing but pure corn.
And for his pains I'll heave him up awhile
And, after, smother him to have his wax;
Such bees as Greene must never live to sting.
Then is there Michael and the painter too,
Chief actors to Arden's overthrow ...
I'll cast a bone
To make these curs pluck out each other's throat;
And then am I sole ruler of mine own. (8.23–30, 36–8)

The ruthlessness, and the contempt for his accomplices ('curs'), are in the exact mould of Lorenzo's contempt for his 'base companions' and 'slaves'. But Mosby goes beyond Lorenzo, for his extinction list extends to Alice, the woman he has feigned to love and sworn to marry: 'I will cleanly rid my hands of her' (43). Knowing Mosby's plans to kill her may make theatrogoers and readers feel sorry for Alice, whose desire to have a happier life will be extinguished by the man who has power over her. Yet at the same time we cannot approve her ruthlessness, especially the brutal way she stabs her dying husband. To create such a complex female character is an achievement for which Kyd deserves long withheld recognition.

The third of my newly attributed plays is the comedy *Fair Em*, which survives in a much abbreviated and damaged text, about half the length of a usual Elizabethan play. It contains neither vengeful women nor comedy in tragedy, but it includes intrigue in both plots. In the 'public' plot, involving historical figures (William the Conqueror, the Marquis of Lubeck), disguise is used for deceiving identity. In the 'private' plot, Em (short for 'Emma') is wooed by three men, two of whom she doesn't like. To deter one of them she pretends to be blind, to deter the other she pretends to be deaf. Her intrigues succeed as she finally gets the man she loves, who intuits that she is only feigning disability. The two plots are cleverly interwoven, and Kyd pokes fun at the two unwanted lovers, who utter identical formulaic speeches, as Perseda and Lucina do when they are separated from their lovers.

I have summarized that part of my attribution case based on major plot parallels between these three plays and Kyd's acknowledged work so that readers and theatregoers familiar with Elizabethan drama can get accustomed to this unusual feature.¹¹ For the new ascriptions I supplement those discussions with the small-scale approaches that usually form the basis of attributions. The most frequently used method in reading-based attribution is the identification of phrases that occur in both the anonymously published play and in a dramatist's acknowledged works. This method was used with great success by the series of scholars between 1903 and 1948 who identified Kyd's authorship of *Arden of Faversham*, citing hundreds of matches with his three plays and his prose work. Scholars with rival candidates (notably MacDonald Jackson) used to reject such evidence as 'subjective' and 'biased', even though their evidence was there for all to see. Since 2017 that is no longer possible, thanks to Pervez Rizvi's publication of a corpus of 527 plays published between 1552 and 1657 which he had programmed to identify every phrasal repetition in every play.¹² When the words are contiguous, linguists describe such repetitions as 'N-grams', where N is any number between 1 and 10. Rizvi discovered that the most effective lengths for attribution purposes are three-word phrases (trigrams) and four-word ones (tetragrams). When the phrase is interrupted by other words, that is known as a collocation, which Rizvi limits to a maximum of ten words intervening. N-gram matches are acceptable evidence when a phrase occurs in the target play and in other works by the same author,

¹¹ In *Recovering Thomas Kyd*, I provide detailed treatment of these plot structures both for the accepted canon (*The Spanish Tragedy* and *Soliman and Perseda* in chapters 2 and 3) and the newly attributed plays (*King Leir*, *Arden of Faversham*, and *Fair Em* in chapters 5, 6, and 7). I also compare similarities of plot structure between the accepted and the newly attributed plays.

¹² See Rizvi, <https://www.shakespearestext.com/can/>.

but the strongest evidence is provided when the match is unique, occurring only in two plays. Users of this database will find full explanations of the principles on which Rizvi has selected the most significant N-grams from the millions that he has identified. He also records several experiments that he has made, one of which, 'Arden of Faversham and the Extended Kyd Canon', confirms my attribution to Kyd of *Arden of Faversham*, along with *Fair Em*. In this experiment *King Leir* was not as clearly profiled, due to the inevitable overlapping lexicon of rulers and subjects that it shares with other history plays. But analysis on its own terms leaves no doubt.

The unique matching phrases define an author's personal lexicon, and can be thought of as jigsaw pieces making up his 'phraseogonomy', to use the convenient term invented by that pioneer in corpus linguistics, John Sinclair.¹³ The usual way of presenting these matching phrases is by a list arranged in the order in which they occur in a play. This is a convenient form of presentation for the compiler, but experience has shown that few readers have the stamina, or patience, to inspect the whole evidence, so weakening its impact. In this edition, therefore, I have introduced a new way of presenting this evidence, as footnotes to the text at the point where they occur. Readers can hardly overlook such evidence, and this method has the added benefit of recording the dramatic context in which the phrasal match occurs, which can often be significant. The standard type of presentation is this (in which bold face indicates an exact match, underlining indicates a word having the same meaning or function):

What dismal **outcry** calls **me from my rest**? *AF* 4.87

What outcries pluck **me from my naked bed**? *Sp.T* 2.4.63

In our authorship commentaries on newly ascribed plays, the matching phrase from a play in the accepted canon will appear as a footnote at the appropriate point.

The other main attribution method involves measuring features of dramatists' verse styles. The pioneer study of prosody was P. W. Timberlake's dissertation on the incidence in Elizabethan drama of feminine endings,¹⁴ that is, when a ten-syllable line receives an extra syllable, as in 'To be, or not to be, that is the ques'tion.' This feature had been successfully studied by Victorian scholars to identify the work of Fletcher and Massinger,¹⁵ but

¹³ See his essay, 'Phraseogonomy', in Sinclair, *Trust the Text: Language, corpus and discourse* (London, 2004), pp. 177–84, building on the notion of physiognomy as a defining feature of the human face.

¹⁴ See Timberlake, *The Feminine Ending in English Blank Verse: A Study of its Use by Early Writers in the Measure and its Development in the Drama up to the Year 1595* (Menasha, WI, 1931).

¹⁵ See Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author*, pp. 47–53.

Timberlake supplied reliable statistics and established a sound historical basis. He showed that the 'University Wits' (Peele, Greene, Lodge, Marlowe) used a regular iambic line with a low incidence of feminine endings, ranging from 0.5 per cent to 3 (a statistic that removes any possibility of Marlowe as co-author of the *Henry VI* plays). His crucial finding for this study is that Kyd was the first dramatist to use feminine endings frequently, soon followed by Shakespeare. Timberlake's figures were for Kyd, *Soliman and Perseda* (1588): 10.2 per cent; *King Leir* (1589): 10.8; *Arden of Faversham* (1590): 6.2; *Fair Em* (1590): 6.5; *Cornelia* (1594): 9.5; and for Shakespeare, 2 *Henry VI* (1591): 10.4; 3 *Henry VI* (1591): 10.7.

The advent of the Russian school of metrics, which abandoned the classical quantitative system for one based on stress, either 'Strong' or 'Weak' (the regular iambic pentameter alternates the two: W S W S W S W S W S), allowed scholars to count the stress pattern for every line and establish percentages. In 1969 the Estonian scholar Ants Oras produced a study limited to pause patterns within the pentameter line, based on punctuation.¹⁶ His results for *The Spanish Tragedy* and *King Leir* show great similarity. A much more comprehensive study was provided by Marina Tarlinskaja,¹⁷ a pupil of the distinguished Russian prosodist M. L. Gavrilov. Her analysis of 'Kyd's versification' (87–116) endorses my attribution of *King Leir* and *Fair Em* to the Kyd canon. She originally gave the whole of *Arden of Faversham* to Kyd, but seems to have been influenced by the unreliable stylometric method of MacDonald Jackson that attributes scenes 4–8 to Shakespeare.¹⁸ Other prosodic features of these scenes in her analysis, however, identify them as fully characteristic of Kyd.

When large-scale approaches, such as my studies of Kyd's three main plot-structures, are endorsed by those on a linguistic scale, instanced by phrase matches and prosodic measurements, an attribution can be regarded as highly probable. This edition will give readers every chance to evaluate my attributions.

My research also identified Kyd's part authorship of two history plays, 1 *Henry VI* and *Edward III*, to which Shakespeare also contributed. For the first, I identify its origin in the play that Henslowe recorded as '*harey vi*', performed with great success by Lord Strange's Men at the Rose theatre

¹⁶ See Oras, *Pause Patterns in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama: An Experiment in Prosody* (Gainesville, Fla., 1960).

¹⁷ See Tarlinskaja, *Shakespeare and the Versification of English Drama, 1561–1642* (Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2014).

¹⁸ For a full discussion of Jackson's methods, which are based on Caroline Spurgeon's discredited autobiographical approach to metaphor, see Vickers, *Recovering Thomas Kyd*, ch. 8.